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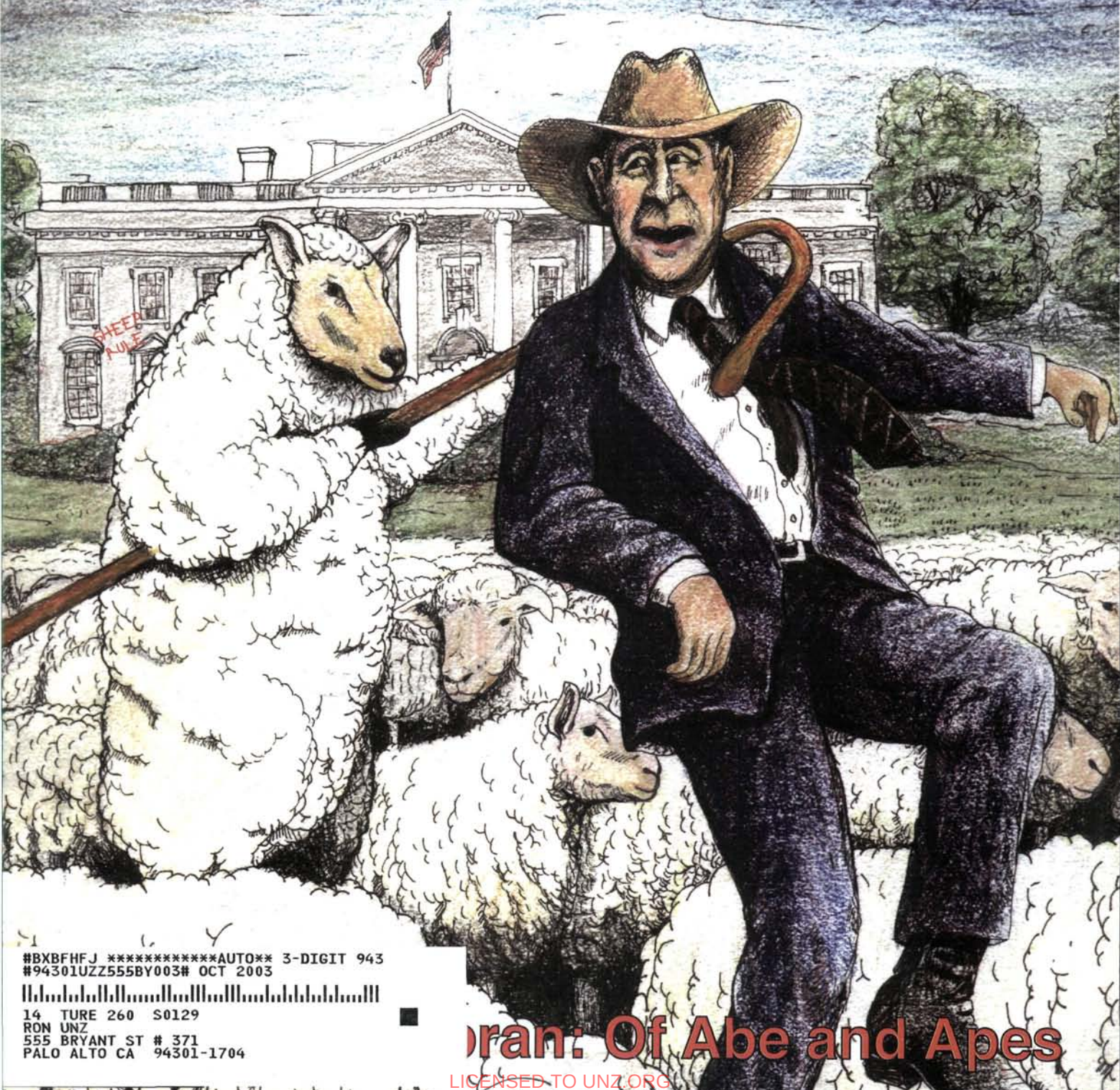

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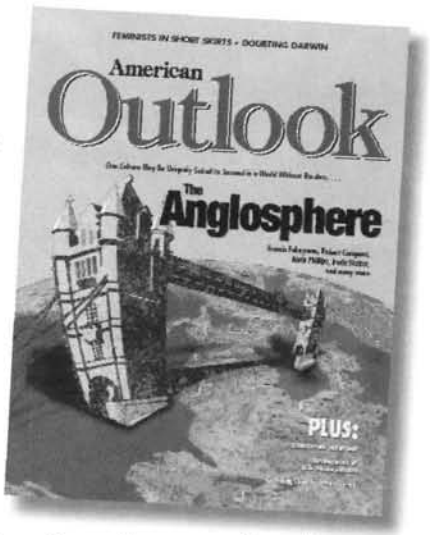

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Masculine Christianity

Regarding Aaron D. Wolf's article concerning Ned Flanders' appearance on the cover of *Christianity Today* (*Cultural Revolutions*, May): While I agree that Ned is not a flattering portrayal of evangelical Christianity, we must remember that, when dealing with *The Simpsons*, no one is portrayed in a manner any better than Ned. I doubt the show's creators are ridiculing evangelical Christians the way jocks would tease and beat up the school nerd, as Mr. Wolf suggests. If that's the case, then *everyone* is the school nerd, because all of the characters are mocked, not just the Christian. Ned's exaggerated and laughable mannerisms are no worse than those of any other character. Most of the characters (with the possible exceptions of Chief Wiggum and Mr. Burns) aren't merely targets for ridicule, but complex characters with strengths and weaknesses. This includes Ned. To quote *The Simpsons*' executive producer, Al Jean, "We don't mock Ned's faith. We actually think he's a guy with a lot of wonderful qualities."

While, as a Christian, I wouldn't exactly celebrate Ned Flanders, I wouldn't take offense at him either. In the end, in *The Simpsons*' world, Ned is just another cartoon character.

—Brian Fife
Elk Grove Village, IL

Mr. Wolf Replies:

Let me begin with a confession: I think *The Simpsons* is the best show on television (other than, say, *Monday Night Football*). With his revolving staff of writers (which has included NBC's Conan O'Brien), Matt Groening has been able to keep his material fresh where lesser shows would have suffered writer's block by now. One of my favorite characters on the show is Ned Flanders, precisely because he embodies so many of the goofy characteristics that make American Christianity—well, goofy. Effeminate, thick-mustached, always cheer-diddly-eerful—most of us, if we are honest, would admit that we know one or two Ned Flanderses (especially since, as I pointed out in my article, Flanders is a composite of fundamentalism, neo-evangelicalism, mainline Protestantism, and Catholicism).

Al Jean's statement is certainly true: The writers for *The Simpsons* do not paint Ned as a ridiculous caricature (like Chief Wiggum and Mr. Burns); Flanders is likable—a nice guy, just like his clones at your church or mine.

And that's precisely the point: *Christianity Today* likes the cartoon caricature and has (quite literally) made an icon of it. We are supposed to *laugh* at the Flanders boys (Rod and Todd) when they jump on the trampoline, crying "Catch me, Jesus!" and "Each leap brings us closer to God!" *Christianity Today* takes it *seriously*: "The young Flanders boys are total innocents; they believe they are getting closer to God when they jump on the Simpsons' trampoline, and they complain that they only get to attend church three times a week."

No one doubts that, as Mark Pinsky said in his article, "Flanders is a complex and nuanced character who often raises serious issues." What's disturbing is that evangelicals seem to be "just okily dokily" about being effeminate, anachronistic, milk-toast believers, locked in their own subculture of Christian rock CDs, T-shirts that read "God's Gym" and "This Blood's For You," and copies of *Left Behind*. As Pinsky put it, "Flanders is actually the physical embodiment of 'muscular Christianity,' a man who would be right at home at a Promise Keepers rally." It's hard to imagine such "muscular" Christians as these standing unflinchingly before Nero, confronting the Moors alongside Pepin the Short, nailing 95 Theses to a door (or excommunicating the one who did so), or even calling someone a heretic.

On the Declaration

I disagree with Stephen B. Presser's statement (*The 225th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence: A Chronicles Roundtable*, June 2001) that the Declaration of Independence is not part of the U.S. Constitution. True, as the professor says, the Declaration was not adopted by conventions in the 13 states in the man-

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ner prescribed in the seventh article of the Constitution, nor adopted as an amendment, as prescribed by the fifth article. But, without the Declaration, the Constitution would be nothing but an interesting document.

The Constitution presupposes the pronouncements of the Declaration, which, therefore, is like a preamble that may be called in aid of construction. The Constitution presupposes the 13 free and independent states mentioned in the Declaration; without those, the Constitution could not have been adopted.

The Constitution presupposes the laws of nature and nature's God mentioned in the Declaration. Thus, authentic interpretation rejects legal positivism and secular humanism and rests on natural law, given objective shape by centuries of legal tradition.

For the same reason, the unenumerated rights protected by the Constitution necessarily include those certain unalienable rights mentioned in the Declaration. Those unalienable rights are defined in terms of the existence of God Who ordained natural law, the spiritual essence of human nature assumed by natural law, and other moral absolutes established by natural law.

Because the Constitution presupposes the Declaration, the fundamental law of the United States is an objective truth, however far judges may stray from it, and this truth does not prohibit prayer and religion in public schools, does not guarantee abortion-on-demand as a sacred right, and does not demand legal recognition of gay marriage. Nor does it glorify the French Revolution, or adopt the teachings of Freemasonry, the Illuminati, or the Enlightenment.

Don Livingston is right: The Declaration is an ordinance of secession from the British Empire. And because the Constitution presupposes the Declaration, the states of New England had a right to secede from the Union in 1815, and the states of the South had a right to secede from the Union in 1860-61.

Clyde Wilson speaks the melancholy truth: The Declaration has been bastardized by the confused and weak-minded into something which Jefferson never had in mind. "All men are created equal" has been especially perverted. Jefferson owned slaves, but treated them lovingly, as his equals in the eyes of God, exactly as taught by St. Paul in the sixth chapter of Ephesians, and he became the father of the Southern abolition movement.

—John Remington Graham
St-Agapit, Quebec

Dr. Presser Replies:

I'll stick to my comments as made. The Declaration *qua* document is no more a part of the U.S. Constitution than were the Articles of Confederation, the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights of 1689, the colonial charters, or the many other documents of fundamental law that have been with us since the Code of Hammurabi. Nevertheless, I think a close reading of my piece indicates my agreement with Mr. Graham's position that the natural-law theories on which the Declaration was based are very much a part of our continuing constitutional jurisprudence and our tradition, and I'm in agreement with most, if not all, of the conclusions he draws from that tradition.

On True Education

Chronicles crackles with goodness and excitement, and I hope that one of these days I can send it something worth including either in the magazine or in the *Chronicles Extra!* section of your website. I was introduced to *Chronicles* thanks to the "critique" the *Weekly Standard* gave it back in 1996, right after Pat Buchanan's early success in New Hampshire (as an example of "the way those paleos think"). It's been a remarkable experience coming to terms with the ideas and truths expressed in *Chronicles* and even just adjusting to its overall style and format. It has been a splendid "nonacademic" education (meaning, of course, one that is genuine) to supplement the very academic one I've been receiving as a graduate student at Columbia (though I'm glad to report that the study of Russian literature has remained remarkably immune to the poisons seeping in from other departments and disciplines). As a matter of fact, if and when that time comes, I think I'll give my son as a graduation gift CDs of all of Bach's cantatas, a complete Thackeray, and a four-year subscription to *Chronicles*!

—John Freitag Isham
New York, NY

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GEORGE H. RYAN, Illinois' Republican governor and *bona fide* "compassionate conservative," has borrowed one from the Clinton playbook: He seems to think that a vast right-wing conspiracy has been out to get him since he took office, forcing him to decline to run for a second term. The real reason, of course, is that—due to mounting charges of corruption and Ryan's consistently left-wing policies—he wouldn't have a snowball's chance in Texas of winning again, having alienated most of his base.

Setting aside the "license-for-bribes" scandal (in which illegal, non-English-speaking Mexicans were given semi-truck licenses in exchange for payola during George Ryan's stint as secretary of state), the most interesting aspect of his besmirched tenure as governor is that Illinois Republicans championed him in the first place, only to throw up their hands in despair each time he connected with one of his telegraphed passes.

"George Ryan," according to his campaign website, "does not believe a state income tax increase is needed. Illinois' revenue growth is up substantially. The state ended the fiscal year with $800 million in the bank. State spending has been brought under control. Government needs to live within its means." Of course, what he *meant* was that he would raise revenue to finance his massive Illinois FIRST program by doubling or tripling "user fees"—vehicle-registration fees, title-transfer fees, and liquor taxes. It was quite a thrill for many Illinois taxpayers to discover they were really *users* (though here in Winnebago County, our Republican county-board chairperson refers to us as "customers"). Conversely, since taking office, Ryan started talking about the possibility of limiting and, in some cases, eliminating tollbooths on Illinois highways. Highway tolls, though annoying, are the closest thing we have to genuine "user fees," since out-of-state commuters get socked alongside Illinois taxpayers.

Candidate Ryan outlined what would become his Illinois FIRST program during his campaign, promising the moon when it came to repairing Illinois highways. Where did he plan to find the money for "building a transportation infrastructure that relieves highway congestion, promotes economic development and supports mass transit"? Where else? Yet Republican voters just kept chanting the mantra, "Republicans are for tax cuts" and punched Ryan's chad.

What should have been even more obvious to voters was George Ryan's planned assault on gun owners. In campaign literature, Ryan reminded the soccer moms of suburban Chicago that he supported the Brady Bill, even when it was unfashionable among Republicans; that he was in favor of mandatory trigger locks for guns inside homes where children are present, and that parents who resist should be charged with felonies. Surprise, surprise: When elected governor, George Ryan pushed for gun-control laws even beyond what he had promised, insisting that anyone transporting a gun—even one contained in a case—in a vehicle in which ammunition is "readily accessible" should be charged with a felony. This was part of his version of the Safe Neighborhoods Act—a piece of legislation designed to reinstate Draconian gun-control measures found unconstitutional by the Illinois State Supreme Court. Governor Ryan tried to ram his Safe Neighborhoods Act through the Illinois House last Christmas, by calling a special legislative session that forced many of the state reps to stay in Springfield during the holiday break. The bill passed the following spring, but only after the charge for a first-time criminal offense (say, for some hunter who travels with his box of bird-shot shells in the floorboard of his pickup) was reduced to a misdemeanor—and that's only for the first offense. All bets are off, though, if your pistol is loaded and under the seat (say, in the case of some honest, taxpaying citizen who has to drive through a gangland every day on his way to work).

Like Clinton and Bush, Ryan campaigned on his commitment to uphold the rights of "hunters and collectors" (always code for latent anti-gun tendencies), while supporting the ban on assault weapons and opposing a concealed-carry law "out of a firm conviction that allowing more people to carry guns will only increase the bloodshed on our streets." That's right—everyone who carries a loaded gun for self-defense is really a latent criminal, just waiting to "increase the bloodshed." Candidate Ryan painted his Democratic opponent, Glenn Poshard, a former school teacher, as a gun nut, simply because Poshard supported a concealed-carry law that applied only to former policemen and military personnel.

For the record, Glenn Poshard was also more conservative than Ryan on abortion, stating in his campaign that he was pro-life across the board. The Ryan campaign refrained from discussing the issue, allowing pro-life Christians to circulate voters guides indicating that George Ryan was very pro-life, while casting doubt upon the evil Democrat Poshard. The official position of the Ryan campaign was as follows: "George Ryan is pro-life with exceptions for rape, incest, and the life of the mother. He is aware that the U.S. Supreme Court has clearly stated that a woman has a Constitutional right to choose to have an abortion [always code for latent anti-life leanings]. As Governor, he would carefully weigh any abortion-related legislation to ensure that it does not run counter to existing Constitutional law, and would likely withstand court challenges. George Ryan does not and never has used one's position on this issue as a litmus test for inclusion in the Republican Party." This past June, Ryan vetoed Illinois House Bill 709, which would have stopped all state funding of abortion in Illinois, for which he was praised by Republican Lt. Gov. Corinne Wood: "[F]irst, it was the right thing to do because protecting the health of poor women is good public policy; second, the Governor's veto was consistent not only with the law and the courts, but also with Republican philosophy." Wood is now considering running to replace Ryan.

In addition to these feats of conservatism, George Ryan has sparked a national debate over the death penalty by issuing a moratorium on all executions in the state of Illinois because he believes there are too many blacks on death row. In mid-August, he vetoed legislation sponsored by Rep. Susanna Mendoza (D-Chicago, and a Latino representative of a Latino community riddled with gang violence), which would have made those convicted of gang-related homicide automatically eligible for the death penalty (if Ryan ever reinstates it). Governor Ryan claimed that this legislation "introduces arbitrariness and discretion" by singling

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out minorities, because gangs are mostly made up of blacks and Latinos. That doesn't quite jibe with his campaign statement that he would "put the priorities of law-abiding people ahead of hoodlums." Of course, by "hoodlums," he meant white suburbanites.

The absurdity of George Ryan's career as a one-term governor in the Land of Lincoln is undeniable. The real question that remains is: Have conservatives learned their lesson? Why voters who are pro-life, pro-gun, and anti-tax always default to the Stupid Party is beyond reason. But if George Ryan's ridiculously left-wing term has been a wake-up call for them, then perhaps he has served a purpose.

—Aaron D. Wolf

National identity cards?

You may think that as an American citizen, you do not own such a thing, and under no circumstances would you contemplate accepting one. That's just something for Europeans, Latin Americans, people from countries with a Roman Law tradition, and other such lesser breeds without the law. Any American legislator would think it suicidal to introduce an identity-card law.

Now, all of this is quite true, but nevertheless, we do carry official identity papers, and not just our social-security cards, which we do not have to show to police on demand—not yet. But we certainly carry identity cards if we ever hope to travel by air. If you check in for any commercial flight of any distance, you have to show an official photo ID, and only a government-issued document will suffice. No card, no travel, and no chance to participate in all the personal and professional opportunities opened by the democratization of air travel. That makes your identification document—usually, your driver's license—a virtual national identity card, or what the old Soviet Union called an "internal passport." Identity cards have come to the United States, and nobody protests.

How did they ever sneak this one by us? The official justification was that such identification made terrorism less likely—a proposition that, on slight examination, proves to be utter nonsense. Rarely do terrorists give themselves away by revealing their occupation on their personal papers ("Purpose of visit: mayhem, murder, and carnage"). Moreover, as every counterinsurgency expert knows, if there is anyone whose papers are always in impeccable order, it is the terrorist. The idea that demanding personal identification might control crime is ludicrous, but the whole story does reveal an alarming truth about the ordinary citizens of what they imagine to be a law-abiding democratic state. People are prepared to let police and government get away with pretty much anything, so long as it is justified in terms of some convenient outside menace—the more thoroughly demonized the better. And once this ultimate demon's name has been invoked, the public seems to lose any critical sense about official claims. Oh, you're doing this to fight *terrorists*. I see—that's different.

The tendency to cave in to police bluster was in the news repeatedly this past summer. A fascinating discussion occurred when the American Bar Association organized a group to role-play the social and legal effects of a biological warfare attack on an American city. Not surprisingly, the conclusion was that such an attack—or even a rumor of such an outbreak—would basically be grounds for eliminating all civil liberties overnight and permitting the military to supersede all city and state jurisdictions. In the words of Suzanne Spaulding, a former lawyer for the CIA and the Senate Intelligence Committee: "To an extent, people are going to do what needs to be done and worry about the legal niceties later." Based on extensive precedent in recent years, she is evidently right. We'll take pretty much anything thrust upon us.

Illustrating the same grim fact was a recent report from the RAND Corporation entitled *Super Bowl Surveillance: Facing Up to Biometrics*, by John D. Woodward, Jr. This document explored the implications of scanning large crowds in order to analyze facial features and to use this "biometric facial recognition" technique to pick out anyone previously identified as a potential terrorist. Woodward acknowledges all the difficulties of such dragnet scanning, which offers police forces a technique of surveillance far superior to anything Orwell imagined. "As I board the subway on my way to work, make purchases in stores, visit my doctor, or attend a political rally, my faceprint will be matched with information in the database, allowing the surveiller to track my movements. Similarly, the authorities can enter on their watch list the biometric information—the faceprints—of all those who attended the political rally with me." However nightmarish, such tactics are increasingly being used, whether we like it or not, because they are a means to defeating an unpopular and indefensible outside menace: terrorism.

One nice feature of the RAND report was the perceptive discussion of "function creep," or how police tactics developed to fight serious dangers expand to far lesser crimes. Woodward speculates how biometric technology, once it becomes familiar and acceptable (just as we have come to accept our identity cards), it will be used against other unpopular behaviors. Even then, we still won't fight back. When the police announce that they are surveilling streets to seek out lesser criminals, I can hear the public response now. Oh, it's something to catch *deadbeat dads*. I see—that's different.

—Philip Jenkins

National missile defense

proponents and supporters of American abrogation of the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty claim that Moscow is now grudgingly reconciled to both. When Russian President Vladimir Putin and Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov irritably countered such suggestions, the Bush administration sent Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on a one-day trip to Moscow on August 13. Mr. Rumsfeld's was not a diplomatic mission, however, but an exercise in public relations. Two days before the trip, the *New York Times* conveyed Washington's view that "the outcome is preordained," since, on missile defense, "the United States is unyielding." After the meeting, Ivanov complained that Rumsfeld had failed to explain why he thought the treaty should be scrapped and did not say how many offensive nuclear weapons the United States was prepared to destroy in return for Russian concessions on missile defense.

Why did Mr. Rumsfeld clock 20,000 frequent-flyer miles merely to talk to his Russian counterpart about "a new relationship" between the two countries that would supposedly require them to "move beyond the Cold War institutions such as the ABM treaty"? The reason is simple: The administration wanted to cite his trip as proof of its good-faith effort to appease the Russians and make them into "strategic partners" before President Bush announces America's unilateral withdrawal

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from the ABM treaty. This is likely to happen soon, paving the way for an aggressive antiballistic test schedule in the spring of 2002. In short, as one Washington source put it, "we are on automatic pilot, and there's nothing, nothing, the Russians can do about it."

Such neoconservative triumphalism—said to be particularly rampant in Rumsfeld's own department, where Paul Wolfowitz serves as his right-hand man—is no substitute for coherence, and the apparent ability of the Bush administration to go ahead with "son of Star Wars" is not proof that the policy is desirable or justified. It carries hidden political and security costs that may become fully apparent only when it is too late to reverse the decision. One key consequence of the missile defense project is the continuing improvement in Russo-Chinese relations. Their current *rapprochement* may provide the groundwork for the emergence of a formal alliance, if Moscow and Beijing continue to feel threatened by what they perceive as American unilateralism. Foreign-affairs commentators have taken but scant notice of the fact that President Putin came to the Genoa summit with President Bush in July only two days after signing a landmark friendship treaty with China that was obviously designed to challenge American influence. He and his Chinese counterpart, Jiang Zemin, were careful to emphasize that they were not creating a military alliance, but in the same breath they issued a joint statement supporting the ABM Treaty. After the signing ceremony in the Kremlin, President Jiang said that the friendship treaty "will bring Russian-Chinese friendship from generation to generation. This is a milestone in the development of Russian-Chinese relations."

Putin and Jiang said the treaty was not aimed at other countries and had no secret military clauses, but their statement in support of the ABM Treaty shows the depth of concern in Moscow and Beijing over missile defense: "Russia and China stress the basic importance of the ABM treaty, which is a cornerstone of strategic stability and the basis for reducing offensive weapons, and speak out for maintaining the treaty in its current form."

The two nations were not reacting only to the missile-defense program, which they fear will compel them to engage in a costly arms race they can ill afford, nor simply to the zeal with which Washington is pushing this particular plan. Their underlying concern is that the United States is seeking to strengthen and indefinitely perpetuate its global preeminence, regardless of their fundamental national interests.

The particular concern of the Chinese is President Bush's declaration that the United States would do "whatever it took to help Taiwan defend itself"—which amounted to the revival of the defense treaty defunct since 1979. In the aftermath of the spy-plane affair last April, the Bush administration also announced that it would sell submarines, destroyers, missiles, and electronic equipment to Taiwan, although this decision is in violation of the Taiwan Relations Act. To Beijing, all this confirmed that China was faced with a strategic challenge that demands a long-term response. China, the oldest nation-state in the world, takes a long view of foreign affairs, and the treaty signed by Putin and Jiang illustrates the point. It seeks to settle permanently the centuries-old border disputes between Russia and China that nearly led to war in 1969, since the absence of territorial disputes is a key precondition for effective alliances. Germany's solemn recognition of the Brenner frontier in 1934 paved the way for the Axis in 1936, and—less ominously—the Saarland referendum helped Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle launch their own historic reconciliation just over two decades later.

The State Department was quick to dismiss the treaty, stressing its lack of specific mutual guarantees and obligations, but this is an example of that historical shortsightedness that has prevailed at Foggy Bottom for far too long. The Russo-Chinese treaty is comparable to *l'entente cordialle* between Great Britain and France a century ago. That arrangement was not a formal alliance to start with. Nevertheless, it did have a similar underlying logic, creating a pattern of relations that was to become fully apparent in August 1914.

In the end, perhaps, the best hope of stopping "Star Wars" is not Moscow, but the dwindling budgetary surplus and the mood of policymakers in Washington. A fight is on the horizon between Rumsfeld's "Vulcans" and the Joint Chiefs of Staff over how deeply U.S. forces have to be slashed to foot the bill for the antiballistic-missile shield—which will easily exceed $100 billion, even for a thin system. Most experts agree that military reform, including streamlining and lightening an insufficiently mobile force, is long overdue. What should come in place of carrier groups and oversized divisions of yore is a smaller, more flexible, ultra-high-tech force equipped to deal with every conceivable challenge to America's security—not an unproved and unnecessary antiballistic-missile system that is irrational and dangerous.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

AMNESTY for undocumented (as we nowadays politely say) workers from Mexico? It's just another trial balloon, and the nice thing about trial balloons is that you can shoot them down. Ready, aim, fire.

I do think this one, suitably ventilated, will flutter down to earth. I fancy the Bush administration, however kindly disposed toward Vicente Fox and the PAN, isn't ready for another blind leap on immigration. The administration is indeed exploring the matter, at Fox's request. I have the sense that this is just what you do for a friend like Fox: You listen attentively to his ideas without committing yourself to notions that simply aren't workable. This one falls into that category. Likewise, George W. Bush is being advised (by such as the *Wall Street Journal*'s Paul Gigot) that, if Republicans consider the growing Hispanic vote important, some massaging of Hispanic sensibilities makes sense.

Mexico—blessed, in Fox, with a decent leader, after years of corruption and political empire-building—needs our help and encouragement. But in offering that help, we need not leap into stygian darkness. We can do this thing in the dazzling light of day, as my senior U.S. senator, Phil Gramm (R-Texas), has proposed.

During Phil Gramm's long political career, no one has ever called him a wimp on free enterprise. He loves the marketplace and its workings. To love the marketplace is to resist obstructions to those workings—but not always. In a fallen world, some obstructions, such as the legal requirements of citizenship, have their vital uses. The ultimate free enterprise state would be Hobbes' state of nature.

Gramm hopes to regularize what already is going on without asking us to cave into lawlessness (viz., the cresting and crashing tides of Mexican and Central Americans entering the United States without a by-your-leave). "Our economy needs them," he says, "but the system of

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illegal employment demeans them as human beings and makes a mockery of the rule of law."

Accordingly, Gramm wants Congress to set up a guest-worker program, under which illegals would receive I.D. cards, a one-year work permit, and coverage under U.S. wage-and-hour laws, with 15.3 percent of their wages set aside for each worker in an interest-bearing account. Fox approves—a good start.

A program like this, assuming it worked as planned (always, in the political world, a problematical assumption), would bring order and regularity to a chaotic situation. It certainly makes more sense than a new amnesty, which would stimulate more illegal border crossings than ever, which would build pressure for another amnesty, which would . . .

Friends and defenders of the marketplace economy—I stand in their front rank, sleeves rolled up—are fond of noting how, in the real world, particular incentives call forth particular responses. The incentive of something (legal status) for next-to-nothing (identifying oneself) is the wrong kind of incentive.

Having said all this, I confess to uncertainty regarding just how well the Gramm plan, if adopted, would work. We seem to be at a great historical crossroads. Throughout the West, by reason of our prosperity and peace, more people want to come live among us than the Western nations have power to regulate—or even accommodate.

I read of economic and political "refugees" trying to force their way into the United Kingdom by any means available, including rubber rafts for crossing the Channel. Sixteen recently stowed away under a Eurostar train. "We want a better life," said a frustrated Kurd protesting at a Calais detention center for illegals.

Senator Gramm nods in vigorous assent. "If I had two little children in Mexico," he says, "and we lived in the conditions endured by many Mexican citizens, no power on earth could prevent me from crossing the Rio Grande for work."

Immigration is the sincerest form of flattery. People come (invited or otherwise) because they see how well things are working here. This summer I spent time in Honduras on a parish adult mission trip. The wonder is why *everyone* in Honduras doesn't come up here.

Of course, not everyone has the energy or ambition to try, which is obviously good. But many do want to improve their lot. The question isn't—never has been—will we have immigration? The question is, can we control it?

Amnesty isn't control; it's unconditional surrender. Where do you stop? Nowhere, that's where. Built into the Gramm plan are limits on the numbers of guest workers, in accordance with economic need. Would that do the job? It might well, but I doubt it, the border being so vast, so long, and so empty.

Dr. Johnson outlined the plain duty of those (like himself) keen to defend standards in the use of the English language: "We retard what we cannot repel. We palliate what we cannot cure." That just may be where we are on immigration—the English-speaking peoples challenged, pulled in different directions, reaching for succor into still-considerable reservoirs of courage and good sense.

—*William Murchison*

OBITER DICTA: The second of our three new quarterly columns debuts this month on p. 13. In *The Bare Bodkin*, syndicated columnist **Joseph Sobran** will cast a Chestertonian eye on the current cultural scene (and he'll write about it, as well). You will find Mr. Sobran's column in the January, April, July, and October issues.

With this issue, *Chronicles* is finally back up on the newsstands. Please check your local bookstore; if it doesn't carry *Chronicles*, please follow the instructions in the ad on p. 5. You could win a one-year extension to your subscription! Newsstand sales are a major source of new subscribers, and wider circulation helps us keep our subscription rates low.

Watch this space for details on upcoming Rockford Institute events. The Institute's Fifth International Convivium will be held during the second half of April 2002 in Tuscany, where we will explore how civilization was reinvented by Italians living in the free cities of Siena, Pisa, Florence, Lucca, and Arezzo. Tuscany was home to Petrarch and Dante, the great painters of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and to one of the most significant political intellectuals the world has produced, Machiavelli, whose muscular defense of republican liberty helped inspire the men who laid the foundation of our own American republic. Get to the heart of a great civilization and understand how provincial peoples fought for liberty—town by town and even, sometimes, street by street. Lectures will focus on Machiavelli, Petrarch, Dante, St. Catherine of Siena, the brave Pisans who resisted Florentine domination, and the gangster-banker Medici who devoted themselves to destroying liberty. A special bonus lecture will set the record straight on the Galileo controversy.

The Rockford Institute's Fifth Annual Summer School (summer 2002) will be held, as always, here in Rockford. This time, we'll turn our attention to late antiquity and look for answers to the question: How do we live full lives in a dying age? Faculty will include Dr. **James Patrick**, provost of the College of Saint Thomas More, and Fr. **Hugh Barbour**, O. Praem, prior of St. Michael's Abbey in Silverado, California. Break out your copies of Saint Augustine's *City of God* and Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*.

The Rockford Institute's Sixth International Convivium, which will be held in Brittany in early October 2002, will address the French Revolution: liberalism *versus* Christianity. A special session will discuss the courageous Christian warriors of the Vendée.

There's still time to register for this year's John Randolph Club meeting, which will be held in Rockford, Illinois, the home of *Chronicles*. Please see the ad on the back cover. For more information regarding this or any Institute event, please visit *www.ChroniclesMagazine.org* or call the Institute's vice president, Christopher Check, at (815) 964-5811.

Our poet this month is **Bruce Guernsey**, a professor of English at Eastern Illinois University. His poetry and prose have appeared in the *Atlantic*, *Poetry*, *Fiction*, *American Scholar*, and *War*, *Literature and the Arts*, among others. Dr. Guernsey is the author of ten collections of poems, including *January Thaw* (University of Pittsburgh Press).

Our art this month is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe.

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"It Ain't Me"

by Thomas Fleming

America's Fortunate Sons

George W. Bush comes as close as anyone to representing the current American aristocracy. It is not that the Bushes are old family or even old money. The family fortunes are usually traced back to great-grandfather Samuel Bush, a middleweight railroad magnate in Columbus, Ohio. Samuel's son Prescott raised the family to national prominence by allying his fortunes with fellow Yalie (and fellow Bonesman) Averell Harriman and his family with Harriman's top banker, Bert Walker. With the Harriman connection, it seemed almost natural for the U.S. government to put old Samuel in charge of munitions manufacturing during World War I, and ever since, the Bush family has faithfully represented the interests of what fellow Republican Dwight Eisenhower called the "military-industrial complex."

George II has been a blue chip off of George I's portfolio, both in his loyalty to multinational interests and in his curious inability to speak a coherent sentence that has not been rehearsed a dozen times. As Ann Richards (or her speechwriter) said so memorably of George Herbert Walker Bush, "He was born with a silver foot in his mouth." Perhaps it is a learning disability; perhaps it is the result of being in so privileged a position that it is impossible to speak directly of anything. Either way, the Georges "come by it honest," since Sen. Prescott Bush (as Gary Wills pointed out some years ago) was almost as incoherent as both his son and grandson, and some day the inability to speak English will be as convincing a sign of royalty as hemophilia or the Habsburg jaw.

Of course, this is America, where dynasties and aristocracies are forbidden, which is why George I dropped the final "g" from his present participles and cultivated a taste for checked shirts and bad country music. (Lee Greenwood was his campaign singer!) In fact, George I was a dead ringer for the conservative senator whom Andy Griffith tries to turn into a good ol' boy at the end of Budd Schulberg's *A Face in the Crowd*. In the movie, an honest network employee reveals both Andy and his senator for the frauds they are. In real life, frauds become TV producers and presidents.

George II has gone one better in abandoning the presidential church (Episcopal) for the decidedly down-market Methodists. This poor-mouth strategy is not a new invention: William Henry Harrison, scion of a Virginia planter family, staged the first log-cabin campaign, and some years before Harrison, a patrician gangster named Publius Claudius Pulcher changed the spelling of his name to the more popular "Clodius" and arranged with a more powerful gangster (one Gaius Julius Caesar) to get himself adopted into a plebeian family.

Although George II apparently shares with Bill Clinton a robust appetite for common pleasures, poor Clinton has had to spend his life proving he is not the cracker that his family has produced since the beginning of time. (If there had been a Clinton in the Garden of Eden, he would have been running a still and trying to make time with Eve. "Forget that 'knowledge of good and evil' stuff, babe, and let me show you how to have a good time.")

Despite the games they are forced to play, Bill Clinton, Al Gore, both Bushes, and all the Kennedy cousins do, in fact, exemplify the American ruling class of our day as much as the Adamses and the Roosevelts did in theirs. From John I to Brooks and Henry was a "descent from glory" indeed, but nowhere near so precipitous a decline as the road that went from Adams to Roosevelt to Kennedy. The Kennedys and Clintons—and, yes, the Bushes—are a far cry even from the mandarins ridiculed by Joe McCarthy. Dean Acheson may have been a "pompous diplomat in striped pants," but he was a fair imitation of a gentleman. Neither Madeleine Albright nor the members of the Bush Cabinet would know the meaning of the word.

Here is the dilemma: Every society requires leaders, and (as Gaetano Mosca and Robert Michels, among others, have explained) the leadership class stamps its mark upon society; yet our own leaders—since at least the beginning of the last century—have been self-seeking, corrupt, and alienated from the culture of most decent Americans. More recently, our leaders have shown that they are incapable even of *leading*—of properly managing a small war for example, or of subordinating their *libido dominandi* to their *libido*. We need an aristocracy, but we have to settle for Bill Gates and Henry Kissinger, Hillary Clinton and Ted Turner.

Readers of Sir Walter Scott and admirers of Sir Philip Sidney may confuse aristocracy with chivalry or with "the gentleman." But not all aristocracies are chivalrous. Cincinnatus and Leonidas the Spartan were not especially gentle people; neither were William Wallace, Hereward the Wake, Castruccio Castricane, or (for that matter) Geronimo, all of whom sacrificed their comforts and risked their lives to defend their people and advance their interests. Chivalry is a fine and noble concept, but it does not define the essence of aristocracy, the plain meaning of which is "the rule of the best and bravest." Even Castiglione, the very model of the Renaissance courtier, concedes that martial courage is the chief virtue: "I judge the principall and true profession of a Courtyer ought to be in feates of armes, the which Armes the Courtyers chiefe profession."

In Greek, the key words which we translate as "good," "best," and "virtue"—*agathos, aristos, arete*—were all connected with manliness and courage, while bad men are preeminently cowards. Nietzsche made the point a long time ago, but it is no less true for Nietzsche having said it. The simplest aristocratic code is the advice Peleus gave his son Achilles: "Always be the best and fight among the champions in the front ranks." "Such

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heroism is the reason," explains one of Achilles' opponents, "that the princes are first served at banquets." Goodness was also a class distinction (as at Rome), and the *agathoi* and the *aristoi* (like Cicero's *boni*) were members of the hereditary nobility. The crusty reactionary Theognis complained that virtue was contaminated when good men, who had fallen on hard times, married the daughters of the *nouveaux riches*.

Inherited nobility seems a laughable concept in the land of the Rockefellers and Harrimans. For centuries, sympathetic foreigners have been saying, "Give the Americans some time. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day, and a patriciate is the work of centuries." Actually, the reverse is true: Aristocracies are forged in battle and conflict and steadily degenerate in more settled times. But even an effete and degenerate aristocracy has its uses. In her memoirs, Kathleen Raine said that she had grown tired, early on, of her intellectual friends for deriding the British upper classes, who retained an almost tribal knowledge of living well.

In fact, intellectuals can talk all day about how other people should live without ever learning how to spend a pleasant afternoon or—what is more serious—how to accept responsibility. Evelyn Waugh's Tony Last (in *A Handful of Dust*) is a figure of fun, reminiscent of Ford Madox Ford's more tragic Tietjens, but both Tony and Tietjens are honorable men who, with quiet courage, hold up their end of every bargain, even when their wives and friends betray them. I do not actually know many such people (save a few in South Carolina, most of them long dead by now), but they provide a hint of what an aristocracy could do for this postdemocratic society.

In a feudal age, the aristocracy is made up of warriors, but war is not the only pursuit of the aristocrat. In 17th- and 18th-century Britain, a landowner was expected to be of service, whether as justice of the peace or member of Parliament, and although we may doubt the inspiring portrait drawn by Clarendon of Viscount Falkland or Fielding's fictional portrayal of Squire Allworthy, the least we can say is that they represented a social ideal that is as alien to us as a virtuous woman.

Even today, the grandsons of robber barons and tobacco merchants spend much of their time defending wilderness areas and endangered species from the predations of our contemporary robber barons. We may laugh at the spectacle of spoiled fops who go on television to champion the cause of a newt threatened with extinction, but we should at least acknowledge that the impulse is noble. Sierra Clubbers with seven-figure incomes may be deaf to the cries of America's working poor, but they have found a cause beyond themselves. They cannot, after all, help being stupid and degenerate, because those are the identifying marks of the ruling class to which they belong.

Americans have simultaneously idolized and demonized aristocracy. The Society of the Cincinnati was denounced as an aristocratic cabal by the very people who worshiped the Marquis de Lafayette precisely *because* he was a marquis. In fact, we have had precious little nobility of any kind throughout our history. Georgie Minafer (in Booth Tarkington's *The Magnificent Ambersons*) insists that three generations are enough to take the taint of enterprise from a family fortune, but the Amberson money is lost in his lifetime.

During the 18th century, both South Carolina and Virginia were ruled by country gentlemen who felt at home in Europe. New York, Boston, and Charleston all had a merchant aristocracy before the Revolution, but in the North, the aristocrats were mostly Tories and fled to Canada and to England. In years to come, their bourgeois successors (Adamses, Otises, *et al.*) aped the anglophilia of the Tories and, as a result, their nascent little civilization failed by the early 18th century, and Northeastern literature (from the charming Washington Irving to the grumpy Henry Adams) became a series of vetos on everything distinctively American. The Adamses, for all their failings, did at least maintain some semblance of public spirit. Henry's father, Charles Francis, was virtually the only honorable man in the Lincoln administration, and he ably served the Union cause as ambassador to the Court of St. James.

The South was luckier. Many aristocrats stayed behind to defend the people and places to which they were attached, and they succeeded in assimilating (as the English were also assimilating in their own country) wave after wave of *nouveaux riches* planters and merchants. The old English aristocracy of the South, as Mrs. Chesnutt observed during the War between the States, had been displaced by rougher Anglo-Celtic types (Jackson, Calhoun, Davis) who had quickly adopted their predecessors' mores. Jefferson Davis was born in a log house. His enterprising father and ambitious older brother eased young Jeff's way into the society he would adorn, and if he always felt somewhat uncomfortable with the Old World of the Virginians, he rarely showed it.

Whatever chance there was for an American aristocracy perished in the war that set the descendants of John Adams against the heirs of George Washington (Robert E. Lee, the son of Washington's great cavalry chief, was married to Martha Custis's great-granddaughter). Henry Adams knew the truth and complained bitterly about the greedy riff-raff that took over the country during the Grant administration and have never relinquished their grip.

In the 20th century, the best Americans were the entrepreneurial business class that Tarkington champions in *The Plutocrat*: Crude, unlettered, and clownish (for the most part), they loved their cities and endlessly improved the amenities of life (and boosted their own achievements). Just at the point when they might have become a civilizing force—when Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt was turning into Dodsworth—they were destroyed by the New Deal and the war that sucked the vitality out of Cleveland and Chicago and made New York the American capitol down to the 1980's, when government grew so great that Washington became, at last, the real center of the American universe.

For Americans who long for a responsible leadership class (whether they call it an aristocracy or a new elite), time is running out—or, rather, it has run out. Such classes bubble up from the people, or at least from the yeomanry and independent businessmen. In America, there is no "people" to speak of any more, much less a yeomanry; we are a nation of well-fed TV watchers and resentful minorities. No populist revolution can come from such a stock: If you think it can, you have not lived out here in the heartland. Our best men remain the smaller entrepreneurs who are, one by one, falling prey to the gigantic interests that have skillfully co-opted the trillion-dollar multinational corporation that calls itself the U.S. government. Before we can begin to speak of an American aristocracy, or of a responsible elite class, we shall have to reinvent (or invent) some formative institutions—a church, a school, a society—that are informed by a code of honor somewhat more stringent than we have demanded from recent American presidents.

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Doug

by Bruce Guernsey

When my father came home from the war
two years after I was born
I couldn't match his voice with his picture
and cried each time he came near.

Learning to talk, I called him, "Doug,"
the way my mother did,
this strange man who tried so hard to hold me—
how could he be my Dad?

My father was there, right there in black and white
over my bed every morning
where I could see him with his uniform on,
boarding a train, waving good-by and smiling,

not that deep voice down the hall,
not those footsteps outside my door.
No, my Dad's a soldier who'll be home soon,
so watch out you, whoever you are.

Then Doug went away like him,
leaving for work before dawn,
the knocker on the front door always tapping
as he closed it behind him in the dark,

the big brass knocker that brought me running
to peer through the mail slot
for him who never knocked, who never came,
only Doug, home late each night from work

tiptoeing into my dream,
without a word in the hush of my room;
this man Doug, come to cover me,
stepping down from the train.

DICTATIONS

Class Dismissed

"That's a class act," we say, when mobsters or prostitutes rise above conventions and snobberies to do whatever they consider, correctly or not, "the right thing." This use of "class" represents (obviously) an inversion of values, but it is still a backhanded tribute to the older conception of aristocracy as the social class that embodies higher values.

The word class is, of course, Latin (*classis*) and could be applied to any organized group (e.g., a fleet), but in the sociopolitical context, it refers to the tax categories established, so it was said, by Servius Tullius. Marxists have imagined that classes simply represent different economic interests (e.g., owners and workers), and that the history of the human race is determined by class conflict. Self-proclaimed capitalists, by contrast, accuse their enemies of stirring up class envy, as if the proletarians who make up the bottom strata of our "classless" democracy need to be told they have no power and scant prospects of getting any in the future. Both sides of this uninteresting dispute are really economic determinists—the only difference being that capitalists believe that businessmen have earned the right to rule society, while Marxists believe they have *stolen* it. Unfortunately, our business classes have failed to provide any aristocracy that is not based on pure profit. Whether it is literature or history or education or simply decent manners, our mercantile oligarchy has displayed few of the leadership traits demanded of an aristocracy. At heart, they are Jacobins, still fearful that there might be a social club that might exclude them, still determined to use the government as (in Calvin Coolidge's words) "a device for maintaining the rights of the people with the ultimate extinction of all privileged classes" (that is, of classes that base their privileges on anything but wealth).

This reliance on money often leads to a cowardly impatience with any call to sacrifice or duty or even good form. In times of crisis, observed Cesare Pavese, such people "become uncouth brutes." Richard Nixon grew exasperated with "the American leader class" at the White House, hearing them "whine and whimper." He preferred to receive "labor leaders and people from middle America who still have guts and a bit of patriotism."

Nixon was nothing if not petty bourgeois, and he made as many mistakes as it is possible for a politician to make without destroying his career—and them some. But he aspired to be something more than the tool of the interests that put him in office. Today, Nixon's dream of becoming a statesman seems not only aristocratic but positively Quixotic.

—*Humpty Dumpty*

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by Joe Sobran

Abe-Worship

At the end of the recent remake of *Planet of the Apes*—turn the page now if you still plan to see it—the hero escapes from said planet and its monstrous chimp-tyrant, General Thade. Returning to Earth at night, his spacecraft crashes in, of all places, the Reflecting Pool at the Washington Mall, and he solemnly marches up the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. There, he finds that Lincoln's face has been replaced by the image of the evil Thade. Just then, squad cars screech up, and the cops who jump out to arrest our hero are all gorillas! The simians have somehow taken over Tellus.

Subbing Thade for Abe is a bit of secular blasphemy, since Lincoln has been as surely deified as any Roman emperor. Even in the year 2001, when the word "irreverent" has become the movie reviewer's highest encomium, when we've been inured to rock bands called The Dead Kennedys and subsidized sacrileges in art museums, it's shocking to see liberties taken with the Great Emancipator.

I laughed alone. Nobody else in the theater seemed to think it was funny, but I felt this movie had been made just for me. I was finishing my own book on Lincoln, in which I try to explain why control of the United States government, if not the entire planet (there's always Switzerland), has fallen into simian hands. And I blame Lincoln. If, one day, his image on penny and sawbuck is replaced by that of a chimpanzee, he can thank himself.

Idolatry of Lincoln—himself often derided as a "gorilla" or "baboon" in the hostile press of his day—began the moment John Wilkes Booth fired his derringer. It was Good Friday, perhaps an unseemly time to be at the theater; but by Easter morning, sermons across the land were likening the fallen president to Christ. In *Lincoln in American Memory*, Merrill D. Peterson tells of a Detroit church in 1929 that featured a stained-glass window portraying Lincoln unshackling a Negro boy. A Southern woman visiting the church one Sunday nudged her son and cried out: "Oh my soul! Yes! Look! Abe Lincoln in a church window!"

Abe-worship is surely odd, considering that Lincoln was not a worshiper—"not a technical Christian," as his wife admitted. His law partner, Billy Herndon, recounts that, as a young man, Lincoln—having imbibed infidelity from Voltaire and Tom Paine—wrote a book attacking the tenets of Christianity, including the truth of the Bible and the divinity of Christ. A well-meaning friend burned it, hoping to save Lincoln's future—and he probably did. From then on, Lincoln maintained a careful ambiguity about religion. He could always cite Scripture for his purpose, but he never really said he believed it himself. As long as the public accepted it, he could use it rhetorically for his purposes.

Lincoln even *sounds* like the Bible—the King James one, anyway. His ear for the archaic was marvelous: house divided, charity, memory, hallow, dedicate, consecrate, devotion, scourge, etc. His vocabulary was purposely quaint. He knew enough Scripture and Shakespeare to create the impression that he was speaking with the ancestral voice of "our fathers."

He wasn't, though. Lincoln's self-education had serious gaps. Other lawyers marveled at his courtroom prowess in swaying juries, but he was also covering up his deficiencies in technical knowledge of the law. He performed a parallel feat in his political career: seeming to embody a tradition of which he was actually ignorant.

It was only gradually, while writing my book, that I came to realize how seldom Lincoln appealed to the Founding Fathers. In fact, he rarely quoted them, except for his obsessive citation of the "proposition" to which he said the "new nation" of 1776 had been "dedicated." And he even got this wrong: What the Declaration of Independence declared was not a monolithic "nation" or "Union," but 13 distinct "free and independent states." For Lincoln, it was crucial to deny that the states had ever enjoyed sovereignty; otherwise, their right to secede was plausible. He even contended that the Articles of Confederation had "further matured" the (unbreakable) Union; he forgot—or pretended to forget—that the Articles began by asserting: "Each state *retains* its sovereignty, freedom, and *independence*." For an antisecessionist president, crushing what he pleased to call "rebellion," that would never do.

In Lincoln's writings, I have found only three fleeting mentions of Madison and Hamilton; even his references to Jefferson, his favorite Founding Father, are few and superficial. He shows no acquaintance with the formative debate over "consolidation" and "confederation" in the 1780's, or with Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions of 1798. The subtleties of dividing power and separating departments seem alien to him; he reasoned from a handful of snippets. By contrast, Jefferson Davis was steeped in the thinking of the founding period. Unlike Lincoln, Davis could have held his own in a conversation with Madison and company.

The most impressive thing about Lincoln is how impressive he could make himself sound. He still impresses by dint of sheer eloquence. Nobody can deny that his words are memorable: We all remember them.

And that was what Lincoln wanted most: to be remembered. In his 1838 speech to Springfield's Young Men's Lyceum, he foresaw the rise of a tyrant who would seek immortality in destroying the free institutions the Founding Fathers had won immortality by building. During the depths of his depression a few years later, as his friend Joshua Speed later recalled, Lincoln was despondent that "he had done nothing to make any human being remember that he had lived." When he signed the Emancipation Proclamation, he remarked: "If my name goes into history, it will be for this act." His ambition was finally fulfilled.

Lincoln's speeches are memorable in

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large part because they are about memory itself: "The mystic chords of memory . . . The world will little note, nor long remember . . . My fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves . . . The world will not forget . . . "

But Lincoln had haunting memories closer to home, which he preferred to forget. He spoke of his own father rarely and with faint contempt, never with warmth; he loved the memory of his mother, who died when he was nine, but he once confided to Herndon that "my mother was a bastard" and never spoke of her to him again. In 1850, Thomas Lincoln lay dying and asked to see his only son, who declined to visit and didn't attend the funeral a few weeks later. Abe had never introduced his father to his wife and children.

Why was Lincoln so strangely remote from his father? Was it just because he was moving up in the world and was ashamed of the coarse and illiterate Thomas? We can only guess. My own surmise is that the old man was a brutal drunkard. We have testimony that Thomas sometimes hit little Abe for minor provocations, after which Abe would never wail, but shed a silent tear. But I find it suggestive that Lincoln became a teetotaler and joined a temperance society. And he never disciplined his own children, whose wildness became an acute annoyance to everyone, including Lincoln's Cabinet. Throughout his adult life, Lincoln seemed to want to be the opposite of everything his father was. He idealized the long-dead national "fathers," but not the actual man who had begotten him. If he was an assiduously self-made man, it was probably because he dreaded becoming the man Thomas would have made him.

If Lincoln seems devoted to abstract principles, it may be because he wasn't defined by concrete loyalties. He was quick to forget old friends and allies who had boosted his career. He was always markedly reserved in his affections. Yes, he was "Honest Abe," in the sense that he paid his debts and spoke accurately, when he spoke at all; but his honesty was far from confessional candor. His inner life remains a mystery. He almost never spoke of his personal experiences in public; to a temperance society, he could speak eloquently on the evils of drunkenness, without alluding to anything in his own life that might have enlisted his passion on the subject. Ambition drove him forward; he didn't look backward.

The impression he leaves is one of personal deracination. He had no ancestors to speak of, except "our fathers"—themselves rather abstract entities, dedicated to propositions. His friends described him as "reticent" and "secretive." When, between his election in November and his inauguration in March, the whole country was writhing over whether there would be civil war, he kept his own counsel for four months, refusing to disclose his intentions. Even his first inaugural address was Delphic in its evasion of the war question.

He did love Shakespeare, especially *Macbeth*—a play that revolves around two Lincolnian themes, ambition and equivocation. Like the Weird Sisters, Lincoln had a lawyer's gift for saying things that were literally true but actually misleading. "I han't been caught lyin' yet," he once told Billy Herndon, "and I don't mean to be." He excelled at not being caught lyin'. For weeks, he let William Seward and Ward Lamon assure the Confederates that Fort Sumter would be evacuated; the Confederates felt betrayed when Lincoln sent reinforcements instead, but nobody could pin the deceit on him. He had personally said nothing.

Throughout the war, Lincoln contrived to interpret the Constitution as ambiguous where others found it quite clear. The separation of powers, in his reading, became remarkably porous; in wartime, the president could assume powers normally belonging to Congress, or to nobody. In peace, the Emancipation Proclamation would have been unconstitutional, but this was wartime, and the Commander in Chief could seize "rebel" property if necessary—meaning if *he* deemed it necessary.

"Perception is reality," as we now say. Lincoln was peerless in creating "perception," in that sense. Even posthumously, he defines himself, through his command of a language—a pastiche of King James English—that only he ever really spoke. It certainly wasn't the political idiom of "our fathers."

Still, Lincoln managed to upstage—even supersede—the remarkable generation that had won American independence and forged a federal union. With a few finely turned phrases, he drastically abridged their thought, creating, if not a "new nation" or a "new birth of freedom," then a new tradition of nationalism and centralization. The real American past was obscured and mostly forgotten. Lincoln's words have become a legacy in themselves, a substitute for a repudiated body of serious political philosophy.

Lincoln is indeed the founder—and perfect symbol—of an amnesiac America that remembers even less of its origins than he did. c

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Nobody but the People

by Samuel Francis

In the "Prologue" to his massive biography of Sen. Joe McCarthy, historian Thomas Reeves describes a scene that took place in Milwaukee, in the senator's home state, in November, 1954, only a month before his colleagues voted to condemn him and thereby effectively to terminate his career. The scene was a mass celebration of McCarthy's 46th birthday by 1,500 of his constituents and fans; as an added touch, the bandleader, a boyhood pal of the guest of honor, had his vocalist croon a newly composed song about the senator. One stanza went like this:

> "That terrible man McCarthy," cries Mrs. Van Soame.
> "That book-burning demagogue," shrieks Linus Double-Dome.
> "McCarthyism sweeps the land," the *Daily Worker* screams,
> And through the press, radio, the Party's poison streams:
> "Joe must go, Joe must go."

The last stanza, to the tune of "The Volga Boatmen," drove the point home:

> Nobody's for McCarthy but the people, and we all love our Joe.
> Nobody's for McCarthy but the people, and our letters tell him so.
> Now little Betsy Williams and old Billy Brown, and all us real Americans want Joe to go to town.
> Nobody's for McCarthy but the people, and we just love our Joe.
> Nobody's for McCarthy but the people, and our votes will tell him so.

The point, for all the nauseating banality of the ditty, is clear enough. What was known as "McCarthyism" was not only about communists in the State Department and the appeasement of the Soviets by the U.S. government but also the sort of people—the class—who were believed to be running the country as a whole: the *de facto* alliance between remnants of the Old Stock establishment symbolized by "Mrs. Van Soame" and the new managerial intelligentsia of "Linus Double-Dome." That class and its best-known political representatives of the day—Adlai Stevenson, Dean Acheson, George C. Marshall, and others—were a constant theme of McCarthy's own slash-and-burn rhetoric, and until the neoconservatives of the 1980's began telling us they were really heroes and started portraying Joe McCarthy crawling out of a garbage can, they remained the stock villains of American right-wing demonology.

McCarthy was by no means the only figure of that era on the American right to embellish his anticommunism and his version of conservatism with direct appeals to "the people" as his natural allies. Two years before the birthday party in Milwaukee, Whittaker Chambers himself had written at the end of *Witness*,

> No feature of the Hiss Case is more obvious, or more troubling, as history, than the jagged fissure, which it did not so much open as reveal, between the plain men and women of the nation, and those who affected to act, think, and speak for them. It was, not invariably, but in general, the "best people" who were for Alger Hiss and who were prepared to go to almost any length to protect and defend him. . . . It was the great body of the nation, which, not invariably, but in general, kept open its mind in the Hiss Case, waiting for the returns to come in.

The Old Right embrace of populism was not confined to political practice but extended to theory. Of all the conservative

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thinkers of the 1950's Old Right, Willmoore Kendall was perhaps the most noted for his endorsement of a kind of conservative populism that saw the embodiment of public virtue in the people rather than in the largely imaginary aristocracies of contemporary Europe and New England. It was the pseudoconservative political nincompoop Peter Viereck who actually thought Adlai Stevenson was a modern-day analogue to Prince Metternich and who would later sneer at Barry Goldwater for his appeal to the masses. Toward the end of his writing career, even James Burnham, perhaps the most explicitly elitist theorist of the Old Right, noted not only the incapacity of the current governing sectors of society to rule but also the populist alternative to them. "But our governors," he wrote in 1969,

> —not the officeholders only but the whole broad naturally governing class, the established elite—are proving themselves no longer capable of governing, of ruling. They have lost confidence in themselves; therefore they can no longer fight wars or stand up to outlaws. . . . In our country, it is the paradoxical and unnatural fact that, more and more, the people—the broad middle mass of people who do the work—are holding the country together, giving it, if unconsciously for the most part, what direction it has, and sustaining the governing elite that, having lost its nerve, must before long lose its mission. This creates a historical monstrosity, since the broad masses cannot govern, and in truth do not want to. If, therefore, the natural governors quit, the masses will have to fashion new ones.

It is now something of a commonplace of American political history that the main leaders of the American right in the 1950's were precisely men like Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon, who were not cut from the same social cloth as such pillars of the Republican establishment as Henry Cabot Lodge and who did not even come from the same part of the country. Indeed, Nixon himself, in his "Checkers" speech of September 23, 1952, encapsulated perhaps the most powerful expression of the new populist right then emerging as a national political force.

Prompted by revelations of a secret slush fund set up for Nixon by his political cronies in California, the Checkers speech, wrote historian Eric Goldman, "was a story of a family, told in a tone of utter earnestness by an ordinary-looking young man in a none-too-fashionable suit." Less of a defense of the slush fund than a rehearsal of what would eventually become the classic Nixonian tactic of accusing the accusers, the speech recounted the modesty of Richard Nixon's social origins in a petty bourgeois home, his personal struggle against adversity, his marriage, his identity as an ordinary man, and his solidarity with family and nation. His war record, in his own words, was not "particularly unusual," and he and his wife were "like most young couples," with ordinary possessions—a two-year-old Oldsmobile, a mortgage on their home, a life-insurance policy, and a cocker spaniel named Checkers. His allusion to the dog and the modesty of his wife's wardrobe—"Pat doesn't have a mink coat, but she does have a respectable Republican cloth coat"—evoked classical republican images of domestic frugality and virtue, in contrast to the pretentiousness and corruption of the elite, and played on a recent scandal of the Truman administration in which an official's wife had received a mink coat allegedly in return for political favors from her husband. Nixon's determination to "drive the crooks and Communists and those that defend them out of Washington," his resolution not to quit the campaign, his reference to his wife's Irish background, and his peroration on America and the greatness of Gen. Eisenhower also incorporated populist resentments of the elite and appealed to national solidarity and ethnic identity.

What is absent from the Checkers speech, which received massive and enthusiastic popular support, is any reference to the traditional bourgeois economic and political ideology that had conveyed the mainstream conservative opposition to the New Deal. There was no attack on New Deal/Truman-era regulatory and economic policies and no invocation of the minimal state, the free market, or economic liberty. Nixon presented his success in his struggle against unpromising prospects as rooted in his family, not in individual aspiration, and as both modest and uncertain, threatened by his political enemies, rather than the natural result of adherence to the bourgeois virtues. The Checkers speech was not a regurgitation of classical liberalism, a defense of the rights of businessmen, or an assertion of Hooveresque individualism; it was, rather, something new to American politics in the 1950's—a claim that the forces of common virtue, patriotism, and social order had been betrayed, dispossessed by enemy forces, sinister forces of "crooks and Communists," who had seized power in Washington and threatened not only to ruin the nation but to destroy any political leader who questioned them. Conservatives today like to snicker at Hillary Clinton's specter of the "vast right-wing conspiracy" out to get her and her husband, but long before Hillary, the leaders of the American right said almost the same thing about their foes on the left—and say it still, as it suits their purposes.

Populism, of course, is almost always associated with the political left, and conventional conservatives, who look up their ideas in Edmund Burke or his pallid 20th-century imitators, have immense trouble grasping the fact that, for much of this century, the populist impulse in the United States has been toward the right—in the sense of defending and affirming traditional moral values, family, community, patriotism, religion, anticommunism, law and order, and almost every other attribute of a healthy social structure. The brute fact is that every left-wing movement in American history since the Progressive Era has been created and led by elites, mainly centered in academic institutions and firmly allied with sister elites in large corporations, big unions, oversized government, and big-mouth media. I will not rehearse yet again James Burnham's theoretical accounting for this fact—that, in the early part of the last century, a technically and managerially skilled elite emerged into political and social power and began reshaping the institutions it controlled to advance its own interests and made use of the ideology that came be known as "liberalism" to justify itself. Burnham was by no means the only thinker to see this transformation, and much the same idea can be found, as he acknowledged, in the writings of other thinkers—John T. Flynn, Lawrence Dennis, and Thorstein Veblen, to name only a few. As the conclusion of the passage from Burnham quoted above suggests, the emergence of a set of people and interests into social power as an elite or ruling class committed to a left-wing agenda "creates a historical monstrosity." It is a monstrosity in part because elites are not supposed to be left-wing at all but right-wing, and for those archaic conservatives who cannot get it out of their heads that the incumbent national elite is their ally and that they and other conservatives remain part of the ruling strata of the nation, the result can be only political paralysis.

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Since they are seemingly wedded to the support of elitism in all circumstances, what are they to do about a left-wing elite? The monstrosity, conceptual as well as political and practical, may go far to explain the utter irrelevance of conventional conservative thought to the crisis of American and Western society that the managerial revolution represents.

Despite the conventional depiction of populism as left-wing in character, it is difficult to think of any genuinely populist movement of the last hundred years that really was of the left. A Depression Era populist like Huey Long may come close, but there are sufficient right-wing elements in him (let alone in Father Coughlin) to question his credentials as a man of the left at all. The leftism of the original Populist movement in the late 19th century was also questionable, which is why such establishment historians as Richard Hofstadter were so skeptical of it. It is now universally conceded that Progressivism, New Dealism, the New Frontier, and the Great Society, as well as the "civil rights" movement, feminism, the antiwar activism of the 1960's, and similar crusades for homosexuals, immigrants, etc.—the entire history of the left in the last hundred years—were all elite movements, bred in, centered on, and largely financed by academic, corporate, and bureaucratic structures, though it is perhaps not yet so universally conceded that such movements reflected the material interests of those who spawned them. It is all but indisputable that populism, for at least the last half-century, has been of the right and not of the left.

The reason for the emergence of a populism of the right is also clear enough: For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. If the emergent elite invokes liberalism as an ideological formula to rationalize its managed subversion of traditional social and political institutions, then it is logical that the forces resisting the elite will invoke an anti-liberal ideology. Since Burkean conservatism is far too archaic and irrelevant for their purposes, it is also logical that the anti-liberalism they will invoke will be of a non-Burkean kind.

Where anti-liberal populism departs from the populism of the left is in its vision of the people themselves. Perhaps one reason for the illusion that populism is, by its nature, of the left is that the left has no problem with enthroning "the people" as an ultimate political authority—at least until "the people" actually start handing down decisions. Those on the political right, less swayed by the myth of "consent" as a source of authority and more imbued with considerations of inevitable social and political hierarchy, will have problems with allowing "the people" to do whatever they wish, even if they do what the right wants them to do. The left, in other words, invariably finds itself confronting the dilemma Orwell depicted in *Animal Farm*—it may invoke the animals as the source of consent and authority for purposes of displacing the farmers, but when the animals do not behave as their new leaders want, the principle that "some animals are more equal than others" has to emerge. The dilemma pops up again and again in the history of the left, and if the transition of the regimes of the left from pure populism to transparent elitism is not skillfully handled, it will be a reef upon which the whole legitimacy of the left will founder.

The right faces perhaps less of a problem—certainly, since no right-wing populist movement has ever come to power, it is a more theoretical problem than the one faced by the left. Having never denied that social and political hierarchy is inevitable if not desirable in itself, the right can "betray" (let us say, "modify") its populist noises a bit more gracefully than the left. That, of course, was Burnham's point in the passage quoted above—"since the broad masses cannot govern, and in truth do not want to. If, therefore, the natural governors quit, the masses will have to fashion new ones." The point of right-wing populism is not to let the people rule where elites rule now, which is what left-wing populism purports to do. The point of right-wing populism is to make use of entirely legitimate nonelite resentments against an incumbent elite to discredit and eventually to dislodge the elite—*and to create a new elite*. In a genuine populism of a genuine right, there should be and can be no cant about "letting the people rule" or quacking about "of the people, by the people, for the people." "The people" probably do not even exist as a socially or culturally meaningful unit and certainly are incapable of coherent political action. As Burnham also wrote, "it does not make much sense to blame (or to praise) 'the people' as an undifferentiated entity. 'A people' becomes historically significant through its articulation into institutions and its expression through leaders and an elite." "The people," that is, do not create elites; rather, elites create peoples.

Undoubtedly, at least some of those who become part of the new elite will be former outsiders who were active in challenging the old regime by which the old elite ruled. But it is far more normal for a revolution of any description to be led by "class traitors" from the old elite itself and for such "traitors" to wind up enjoying (or enduring) the fruits of power in the new regime. Cromwell, Bonaparte, Lenin, and Franklin Roosevelt were all members of the old elites they and their allies overthrew. In the last century, only Hitler and Mussolini were revolutionary leaders who actually came from nonelite ranks.

Populism of the right, as noted, has not been strikingly successful, no matter who its leaders or what its causes, and much of the political (and, indeed, intellectual) history of the last half century in this country revolved around trying to squelch it in one way or another—to discredit its leaders, to debunk its ideology, to blunt or co-opt its demands, to pathologize its followers, and sometimes simply to muzzle and repress its exponents. In large part, the failure of the populist right may be due simply to the overwhelming power of its enemies and the ruthless efficiency with which they have silenced it. But it may also be due in part to the confusion that even today persists on the right about the relationship between populism and the theoretical content of the right itself, a confusion that cannot reconcile invocations of popular will and action with a doctrinal commitment to elitism and hierarchy. This confusion has tended to alienate potential supporters from causes of the right if the spokesmen for those causes wrap themselves too much in the rhetoric of populism and appear to deviate too far from Burkean platitudes about aristocracy and the proper "subordination" to it.

Yet it is difficult to see what alternative course a serious political movement of the right today has besides a populist vehicle of one kind or another. There simply is no Burkean aristocracy today, and whatever virtues such a class ever had are now apparent (if at all) only in social ranks far removed from any group that can be called aristocratic. It is not clear that even those ranks of Middle Americans can now be mobilized into a serious populist revolt against the incumbent ruling class and its regime; if they cannot, however, then probably no other social formation can either. Those on the right who find associations with Middle Americans distasteful either need to reeducate their political palates or learn to make their beds with such paragons of patriotism and virtue as Mrs. Van Soame and her comrades.

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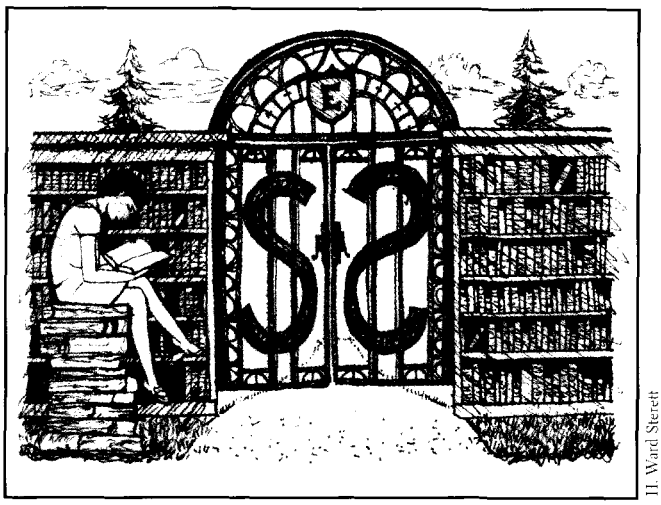
No More Nonsense About Elites

by Claes G. Ryn



H. Ward Sterett

A fish starts rotting from the head, it is said. That a society starts rotting from *its* head needs to be much better understood. Blaming the decline of Western society on a "revolt of the masses" absolves elites, who must bear the brunt of the blame. Catering to popular tastes is not the result of relentless pressure from the grassroots but of an elite class proclaiming the wisdom of "the people" and granting them privileges, giving power to new elites.

Among those who set the tone in America today—in the arts and entertainment, the media, the universities, and politics—the stink of rot is unmistakable. These elites not only condone but generate the growing nastiness, crassness, vulgarity, debauchery, and mediocrity of life. From corporate boardrooms to lecture halls, courtrooms to movie studios, foundation boards to pulpits, legislatures to newsrooms, civilization is gasping for air. Many within the American elites do resist the general trends—some bravely and with limited success—but they do not consider themselves on the winning side. Many try telling themselves that things are not as bad as they seem. Some play, pathetically, at still being of the ruling class by riding horses on their country estate, lunching at the Metropolitan Club, or attending Sunday services with "nice" people at the Episcopal church.

If we are to think strategically about America's elites, it is necessary, first of all, to abandon a preoccupation with elections and politicians or, at a minimum, greatly broaden our conception of politics. Practical politics does not set its own direction; it is largely symptomatic of the moral, cultural, and intellectual life of society. Politicians make a difference—a great deal of difference in some historical circumstances—but they do not autonomously generate the energy and direction of politics. In an important sense, they follow rather than lead. Only at the margins can politicians direct the general trends of civilization. They are confined by the hopes and preferences dominant in their society. These bear the imprint of other elites, living or dead: of those who shape the mind, imagination, and moral sensibilities of a people.

Regarding the dominant political elites as the core of America's problems betrays an insufficient grasp of what ultimately moves human beings and decides the long-term direction of society. If, by some odd historical accident, the ranks of the despised political elites were sharply reduced in an election, the elites that mold the larger moral, imaginative, and intellectual patterns of society would remain. The prevalent cultural ethos would continue to fashion the desires and beliefs of the American people, who would continue to idolize the same kind of politicians they had just removed.

Elites both define and embody a society's deepest longings and fears. By definition, they have the more or less grudging acceptance of a people, however much particular groups may resent their power. New, superior elites could emerge today only if the spirit of civilization were somehow to reawaken among those who shape thought, imagination, and moral sensibility, so that a new sense of what is desirable and undesirable began to emerge. Such a change would require a transformation of the universities, the churches, and the arts, including entertainment.

Another obstacle to clear thinking about America's elites is populism, which attributes wisdom to "the people" and perniciousness to elites. Granted, the common people may look superior to elites at a time when the former are holding on to sound tradition while the latter are recklessly abandoning it. But if the common people seem wiser than elites in times of social upheaval, it is only because they are slow to adopt the new

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ways of their elites. For a while, they may loudly protest departures from inherited beliefs; in the long run, however, they will follow society's trendsetters, whose attitudes will be transmitted through their churches, schools, colleges, music, newspapers, and TV programs. Tradition cannot defend itself without its own strong and sophisticated elites, and the deterioration of tradition will soon weaken and confuse "the people."

There may be nothing wrong with mobilizing ordinary people against misguided elites as long as "common sense" survives, but populism rests on a misunderstanding of how societies develop. Reversing social decline is not a matter of kicking the scoundrels out. It requires the evolution of new elites across a broad range of concerns.

Elites will always set the tone of society. Attempts to create a "classless society" are bound to fail. As Edmund Burke wrote, "Those who attempt to level, never equalize. In all societies . . . some description [of citizens] must be uppermost." Levelers only pervert the social order. "They load the edifice of society by setting up in the air what the solidity of the structure requires to be on the ground." The only issues worth discussing are what should be "on the ground," what should be "in the air," and how that selection might become flexible, circumspect, and humane.

Americans have always been deeply ambivalent regarding social class. Many have resented traditional Western elites, associating them with injustice and oppression. Thomas Jefferson declared that "kings, nobles and priests" are always a "confederacy against the happiness of the mass of the people." The U.S. Constitution forbids titles of nobility. On the other hand, many Americans have an almost fawning attitude toward European royalty and nobility. Some Americans still play at being British gentry. Significantly, the original U.S. Constitution set up quasi-aristocratic institutions: the presidency, the Electoral College, the Senate, and the Supreme Court. An elite of popular representatives would, in the words of the *Federalist*, "refine and enlarge the public views." It could be plausibly argued that, in substance, the Framers set up an elective constitutional monarchy. In his personal demeanor and sense of decorum, George Washington had set standards worthy of a king. Still, populist impulses and social resentment have competed with a desire for elites. Jefferson himself voiced populist opinions, but he also wished for a "natural aristocracy."

All elites are prone to self-centeredness, arbitrariness, conceit, and inbreeding. The remedy, many contend, is "equal opportunity," which will reward merit. America, they claim, has found a way of recognizing ability without creating a class society. But a classless society is an illusion, and talk of "equality of opportunity" overlooks the fact that civilization is defined by how it discriminates among abilities. Since man is, by nature, lazy, civilization can not leave discernment of high and low to "market forces" or the majority. It must create structures for promoting and protecting the highest human aspirations.

Civilization lives by its discriminations and rankings. It penalizes some human inclinations and rewards others. Gatekeepers of many kinds push some individuals forward, hold others back. Civilization favors the wise and virtuous, not the superficial and dissolute; it honors responsible statesmen, courageous soldiers, good students, excellent artists, honest businessmen, and careful craftsmen rather than opportunists, cowards, slackers, pornographers, shysters, and fakers, however able. It is of the very essence of civilization *not* to provide equal opportunity.

A proponent of "equality of opportunity" might say that he opposes only *arbitrary* or *illegitimate* denial of opportunity, but that objection begs the all-important question: How should we properly discriminate? It is through *un*equal opportunity that society encourages individuals to give their best and discourages the opposite. Besides, "equality" is a pure abstraction, a mathematical idea, whose application to society only produces confusion.

A classical, "well-rounded" education used to be considered basic for people of influence. The Greek discipline of *paideia* formed the whole person. It was intended to prepare the individual for the life of the good, the true, and the beautiful by fostering physical vigor, intellectual and aesthetical discernment, and—above all—moral character. Members of elites had to be civilized, broad-minded human beings, whatever their special functions in society. In combination with good social background and experience, sound education was thought to produce the gentleman, the person qualified for gatekeeping.

Many champions of "equality of opportunity" would have all doors flung wide to merit. Why should a bright, knowledgeable lawyer not advance quickly in the law firm and in general society? Perhaps he should, but not if he is a blatant self-promoter, an amoral hired gun, or a person who knows or cares little about the connection of the law to the higher purposes of society. A surgeon highly skilled at wielding his instruments might also be found socially wanting for having a truncated, cynical view of life, choosing his specialty according to profitability, living in a garish home, and chewing gum in his flashy tuxedo—characteristics that are only seemingly irrelevant to the practice of medicine. Civilization needs some condescension and snobbishness.

It used to be said that it takes three generations for family wealth to produce aristocratic breadth and refinement, but there are exceptions, and individuals of humble social origins sometimes contribute greatly to civilization. Burke still may have a point: "The road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation." Employing a lax or narrow definition of merit may facilitate social circulation, but only of a certain type, and soon the new elites will impose their own criteria for advancement. Burke's comment on the era inaugurated by the French Revolution is relevant: "The age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished forever." Burke was too uncritical of the old order, but he also did not know the worst of what was to come.

A society is fortunate if its most truly admirable individuals set the standards for the rest. One of the central aims of civilization is that they be in a position to do so. Sound elites will exhibit flexibility and tolerance, but to ensure the tethering of expertise and ability to the humane purposes of life, they will look for more than utilitarian "skill" and energy in those whom they promote.

Some distinguish between "equality of results," which is supposed to be bad, and "equality at the starting line," which is supposed to be good. But every society is the product of long development, and there can be no such thing as a starting line where "equals" begin seizing their opportunities. Historically evolved social structures and preferences create inequality of opportunity. Equality at the starting line would presuppose

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emptying society of what makes it civilized. For example, for all to start from scratch, there would have to be no inheritance.

Was it concern about equality of opportunity that once gave the United States the most confiscatory estate taxes in the Western world? Or were those taxes inspired by the related presumption that self-made men are especially admirable and are, therefore, the only ones really entitled to their property? The latter reflects the American prejudice in favor of people engaged in utilitarian pursuits, a prejudice so pronounced and one-sided that success in business is assumed automatically to qualify a person for influence in other areas, including—if the success is sufficiently great—the presidency.

An older Western tradition had a very different bias. The narrow and mercenary attitudes assumed to be characteristic of people in trade and production were thought to make them less than suitable for inclusion in the highest social and political circles, which required breadth of mind and sensibility. This bias reflected the classical Greek ideal that those who set the tone should be capable of partnership in the life of the good, the true, and the beautiful. Property was merely an indispensable means to this end. The active life of *leisure*, not busyness, was the highest form of life, a notion that helped define the Western idea of the gentleman. Members of the Western "bourgeoisie" modeled themselves on the nonutilitarian attitudes of the aristocracy, which is one of the ways in which the higher purposes of life were integrated into economic life.

Disparagement of nonutilitarian pursuits (especially in America) has long militated against the highest form of gatekeeping. The trend can be traced back to John Locke, among others. His latitudinarian version of Puritan Christianity helped elevate the self-made, "productive" man by asserting that an individual creates value by "mixing his labor" with things in nature and thus becomes entitled to ownership. Busily working away at tangibly useful tasks is pleasing to God. Locke's emphasis demoted "nonproductive," contemplative work and those elites who engage in it. He counseled that the young be educated for a life of usefulness and gain. Locke disparaged much that had been highly valued in earlier Western culture, as when he wrote that "parents should labour to have [the poetic vein] stifled and suppressed." Poetry usually goes together with gaming, he asserted, and they are alike in that they "seldom bring any Advantage."

The formation of new, discriminating American elites would require a rediscovery of the centrality of nonutilitarian endeavor. To make such a statement at a time when the arts, the universities, and the churches are in deep trouble may seem quixotic as well as discouraging, but a floundering civilization cannot be rescued by uncultured makers and doers. Unfortunately, doers of a nasty kind are often the ones who take advantage of desperate circumstances. In the long run, only a reinvigoration of mind, imagination, and moral character will make a difference. What specific elites might emerge from such a development, we cannot foretell. What we can be predict is that they would put hucksters, smut-peddlers, demagogues, and other self-seekers in their place. c

Night Patrol

by Bruce Guernsey

My father never slept real well after the war
and as my mother tells, he woke in fear
so deep, so far away, he seemed to stare
straight out at nothing she could see or hear.

Or worse—she wraps her robe around her, remembering—
he'd sit there grinning, bolt upright beside her,
this mad look on his face, the bed springs quivering
with some hilarity the night had whispered.

And once, "He did this, your father, I swear he did—
he must have been still dreaming, rest his soul—
he tried to close my frightened eyes, my lids,
to thumb them shut like he was on patrol

the way he'd learned so they would sleep, the dead.
And then he blessed himself and bowed his head."

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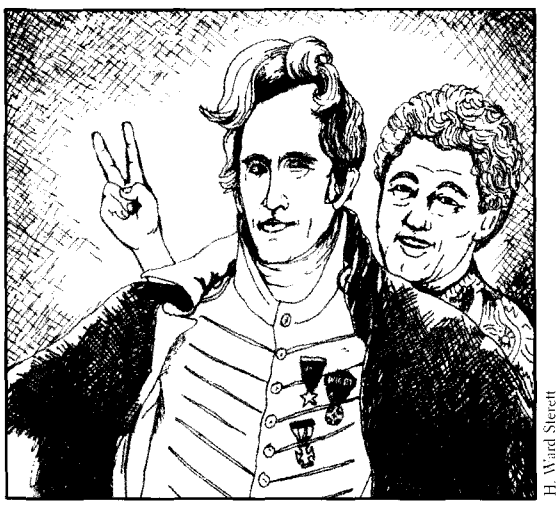
An Aristocracy of Warriors

by Roger D. McGrath



H. Ward Sterett

In his seminal work, *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville noted that the nobility of medieval Europe reckoned martial valor to be the greatest of all the virtues. The feudal aristocracy, he said, "was born of war and for war; it won its power by force of arms and maintained it thereby. So nothing was more important to it than military courage." In America, it is the "quiet virtues," argued Tocqueville, that became respected, because they favored the development of trade and industry. Honesty, hard work, and perseverance did more to foster the growth of commerce and the accumulation of wealth than a warlike spirit that could bring glory but disrupt society. "In the United States," concluded Tocqueville, "martial valor is little esteemed."

Although Tocqueville had the most perspicacious insight of any foreign observer of the American scene, he got this one wrong. While Americans have embraced the quiet virtues wholeheartedly from colonial times forward, they have also honored martial valor—even demanded it—in their leaders. Perhaps it is better for a commercial society when the people exercise the quiet virtues, but it is reassuring for the people to know that their leaders have demonstrated great courage on the battlefield. It is especially surprising that Tocqueville did not recognize this about Americans since he made his tour of the United States during Andrew Jackson's presidency. If Tocqueville had lived into the 20th century, he would have seen an aristocracy of warriors develop in the United States. For presidential candidates, military service became almost a requirement.

No one benefited more from Americans' admiration of martial valor than Andrew Jackson. His parents were Scotch-Irish immigrants from County Antrim to the Waxhaw settlement on the border of North and South Carolina. His father died before Andrew was born, leaving his mother to rear Andrew and his older brothers, Hugh and Robert. Another brother had been tortured and killed by Indians. Some years later, a neighbor described Jackson's mother as a "fresh-looking, fair-haired, very conservative, old Irish lady, at dreadful enmity with the Indians." Mrs. Jackson told her sons that men settle their differences on the field of honor. "Sustain your manhood always," she counseled. "Never wound the feelings of others. Never brook wanton outrage upon your own feelings." Andrew Jackson took his mother's advice to heart.

At 13 years of age, Jackson was already tall and lanky and had great sinewy strength. Even among the Scotch-Irish, whose fury was legendary, Jackson stood out for explosive rages that left him unable to talk and literally frothing at the mouth. "His passions are terrible," said Thomas Jefferson years later. "When I was President of the Senate, he was Senator, and he could never speak on account of the rashness of his feelings. I have seen him attempt it repeatedly, and as often choke with rage. . . . [H]e is a dangerous man." When only a boy, the future dangerous man learned to fight Indians, who were armed and encouraged by the British to attack colonial settlements once the American Revolution erupted. In 1780, his eldest brother, Hugh, just 15 years old, died fighting the British. With their mother's encouragement, Andrew and Robert joined the local militia and fought in several engagements before they were captured. When a British cavalry officer ordered Andrew to clean his boots, the young rebel refused. The officer immediately drew his saber and swung it at the lad. Andrew partially blocked the blow but was left with a deep gash on his forehead.

Before they were released in a prisoner exchange, the Jackson boys contracted smallpox. Robert died within two days of their release, but Andrew, although he hovered near death for a week, was nursed back to health by his mother. She later died from cholera, contracted while caring for American prisoners of war held in British ships at Charlestown. All of 15 years old, Andrew Jackson was an orphan, a sole survivor, and a veteran of

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Roger D. McGrath is the author of Gunfighters, Highwaymen, and Vigilantes.

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Indian wars and the American Revolution.

In 1788, after studying law and being admitted to the bar, Jackson was appointed the public prosecutor for the "western district of North Carolina," a region that would shortly become the state of Tennessee. The area was still a wild frontier, and Jackson did more Indian fighting than prosecuting. The Indians were allied with various European powers (the British in particular) and were armed and encouraged by those powers to wreak havoc upon Americans. In Jackson's first fight against Indians in Tennessee, his militia commander said that Jackson was "bold, dashing, fearless, and *mad upon his enemies*."

Jackson's exploits in battle caused him to rise through the ranks of the Tennessee militia to become its commanding officer and to get elected to the Tennessee constitutional convention, the U.S. House of Representatives, and the U.S. Senate. During the War of 1812, he became a national hero with a series of victories over the British-supported Red Stick Creeks. Jackson was always in the thick of these fights. At Enotachopco Creek, he was described as "Firm and energetic . . . In the midst of a shower of balls, of which he seemed unmindful, he was seen performing the duties of subordinate officers, rallying the alarmed, halting them in flight, forming his columns, and inspiring them by his example."

As a result of these victories, Jackson was commissioned a major general in the U.S. Army and given command over an area that included Tennessee, Louisiana, and Mississippi Territory. This set the stage for Jackson's stunning victory in the Battle of New Orleans, where more than 2,000 British were killed or wounded, while only seven Americans were lost. Jackson's victory humbled the British, saved the West for the United States, and made Jackson an American hero of monumental proportions.

When Jackson later captured Florida for the United States and acted with some disregard for presidential authority, several politicians feared he had Napoleonic designs. From his beginnings as a posthumous child of a Scotch-Irish immigrant father, Jackson had become a warrior aristocrat. That the American people wanted him as their leader was clearly demonstrated when he won both the electoral and popular vote in three presidential races. (The first time, he was robbed of the presidency when, having won only a plurality of the electoral votes, the election was decided by the House of Representatives.) Jackson was the first president not to have come from the planting gentry of Virginia or the New England establishment. To those who followed him, it was clear that one path to the American ruling class was through martial valor. Not surprisingly, nearly all presidents after Jackson served in the military when young, and several were heroes.

William Henry Harrison was one of these. Having dropped out of college to join the Army in 1791, he served in the campaigns against the Indians of the Ohio Valley, distinguishing himself at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in 1794. He left the Army in 1798 with the rank of captain and became the territorial delegate for Ohio and, later, the territorial governor of Indiana. While governor, he took to the field and led a force of regulars and militia against Tecumseh, winning a decisive victory at the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811 and gaining national acclaim. When the War of 1812 erupted, he was commissioned a brigadier general and given command of the Northwest. He led American forces in recapturing Detroit and then handed the British a shocking defeat at the Battle of the Thames in Canada by ordering an unexpected mounted assault. Leaving the Army as a major general following the war, he was elected by Ohioans first as a representative and then as a senator. In the 1840 presidential campaign, the slogan "Tippecanoe and Tyler too!" helped lead him to a landslide victory.

Zachary Taylor was another war hero. He began his military career in 1808 as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Fighting throughout the War of 1812 while serving under Harrison in the Northwest, he was cited for leadership and gallantry and promoted from captain to major. In 1832, now a colonel, he led a regiment in the Blackhawk War, decisively defeating Chief Black Hawk and earning the nickname "Old Rough and Ready." Three years later, he defeated the Seminoles in the Battle of Okeechobee and was promoted to brigadier general. During the Mexican War, although always outnumbered, he won several battles, culminating in a brilliant victory over Santa Ana at Buena Vista in 1847. Back home, Taylor was hailed as a conquering hero and urged to run for president. Although he was apolitical and had never cast a vote, was a slaveholder running on the Whig ticket, and did not bother to campaign, he won the election of 1848.

A farm boy from Ohio, Ulysses S. Grant graduated from West Point in 1843. Although he had been the best horseman in his class, he failed to get his requested posting to the cavalry and was instead assigned to the infantry. His martial spirit became evident during the Mexican War. Serving with the quartermaster corps at the Battle of Monterrey, he refused to remain in the rear with his regiment's supplies and instead helped lead the assault. At Chapultepec, he and a small detachment of soldiers dragged a Howitzer to an exposed position and began a bombardment that contributed importantly to the fall of the town. For his gallantry, he was brevetted captain, a rank that became permanent in 1853.

Grant was a warrior, and peacetime service drove him to depression and drinking and to his resignation from the Army. Civilian life was no better. Grant charged back into his natural element when the Civil War erupted, first as the commander of a Galena militia company and then as the colonel of an Illinois infantry regiment. Lincoln soon made him a brigadier general in the regulars. From the outset, Grant was the most aggressive and successful Union general in the western theater. Within two years, he had risen to lieutenant general and earned a reputation for his bold thrusts at the enemy, decisiveness, bulldog determination, and fearlessness. With his transfer to the eastern theater of the war and his eventual victory over Robert E. Lee, Grant became a national hero. Although reluctant to run for president and without political experience, he won easily in 1868 and then, despite mismanagement and scandal in his administration, won by an even greater margin in 1872.

Every president following Grant in the 19th century, with the exception of Grover Cleveland, was not only a Civil War veteran but a hero. Rutherford B. Hayes entered the Civil War as a major in the Ohio militia and ended it as a major general of Volunteers. He was wounded four times and led the final capture of Winchester. Another Ohio boy who rose to major general of Volunteers was James A. Garfield. He distinguished himself in several battles, including Shiloh. Benjamin Harrison, a lawyer from Indiana and the grandson of William Henry Harrison, rose from second lieutenant to brigadier general of Volunteers and brilliantly outmaneuvered Hood at the Battle of Atlanta to force a Confederate retreat. At 18 years old, Ohioan William McKinley enlisted as a private in a regiment commanded by Hayes. McKinley rose quickly to sergeant and then,

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for gallantry at the Battle of Antietam, was commissioned a second lieutenant. Demonstrating exceptional leadership and valor in fight after fight, he was promoted to major. "If it be my lot to fall," wrote McKinley in his diary during the war, "I want to fall at my post and have it said that I fell in defense of my country, in honor of the glorious Stars and Stripes." Nearly 40 years later, he did fall at his post, mortally wounded by an assassin.

When President McKinley died, Theodore Roosevelt took his place. In no other man did the desire to join the aristocracy of warriors burn more fiercely than in Teddy Roosevelt. By birth, he had privilege and social standing, but that was not enough. His own father had remained a civilian during the Civil War, and Roosevelt, though he idolized his father, thought the lack of service was a stain on the family escutcheon. When the Spanish-American War erupted, Roosevelt left his post as assistant secretary of the Navy to organize a unit of volunteer cavalry. Everyone urged him to reconsider his decision, but he would have none of it, saying it was "my chance to cut my little notch on the stick that stands as a measuring rod in every family." He later wrote, "I want to go because I wouldn't feel that I had been entirely true to my beliefs and convictions, and *to the ideal I had set for myself* if I didn't go" (italics mine).

Roosevelt not only went, but took command of the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry—the Rough Riders—and led the charge up Kettle Hill during the Battle of San Juan Heights. He was recommended for the Medal of Honor, and the award was endorsed up the line until the secretary of war, for personal and political reasons, squashed it. After a strong lobbying effort, the medal was finally awarded this year, making Teddy Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., the only father and son who both received the Medal of Honor. The son, a brigadier general, earned his with his death at Omaha Beach.

When the United States was on the verge of entering World War I, Roosevelt offered to raise a volunteer division and to have it privately financed until Congress took action. Applications for the "Roosevelt Division" poured in by the thousands, and the thought of a former American president leading troops at the front electrified demoralized French leaders. "I think I could do this country most good by dying in a reasonably honorable fashion, at the head of my division in the European War," said Roosevelt. President Woodrow Wilson, however, worried that Roosevelt would *not* die and would return once again as a hero. Despite pleas from both American and foreign dignitaries, Wilson dared not put Roosevelt in command of anything. Roosevelt fumed and waited stateside while his four sons and a daughter served in Europe: Quentin, a pilot with one German victory to his credit, died in a dogfight; Archie was badly wounded and awarded the *Croix de Guerre*; Kermit received the British Military Cross; and Ted, brave to a fault, was both gassed and wounded. Ethel served as a nurse with *Ambulance Americane*.

Short, bespectacled Harry Truman, a sergeant in the Missouri National Guard, was commissioned a lieutenant when his unit was called to duty in World War I. During the Meuse-Argonne campaign, he was promoted to captain and commanded an artillery battery in some of the hottest action of the war. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Truman was a colonel in the Army reserves and a U.S. senator. Although 57 years old, he requested active duty, but President Franklin Roosevelt wanted the Democrat to remain in the Senate. Also in the Army during World War I but remaining stateside was Dwight Eisenhower. In World War II, he rose to Supreme Allied Commander. When prevailed upon by the Republican party to run for the presidency, he acquiesced and won by a landslide in 1952. Despite a lackluster performance in office, he was reelected by an even greater majority in 1956.

John F. Kennedy's heroism as skipper of *PT 109* (and later of *PT 59*) in World War II was one of the factors that gave him a narrow victory over Richard Nixon in the 1960 election. The negative whispers about Kennedy did not concern his sexual escapades—the general public was still ignorant of his philandering—but his Roman Catholic faith. "The Pope will rule America, if Kennedy is elected," intoned his detractors in *sotto voce* utterances. In addition to other responses, supporters of Kennedy always emphasized his combat in the Pacific and that fateful night in the Solomons when his boat was cut in half by a Japanese destroyer. He was decorated with the Navy and Marine Corps medals and the Purple Heart. This was a man who had fought and nearly died for the flag. Ironically, Nixon also served in the Solomons, but in a rear area. More than once, he volunteered for frontline duty, but the Navy denied his requests.

Another sailor in the Pacific was Gerald Ford, who served aboard the U.S.S. *Monterey*, a light carrier that saw action in a dozen campaigns. Soaring overhead in a torpedo bomber was a winged sailor, George Bush. His attack on a Japanese radio station, although his plane had been hit and his engine was engulfed in flames, earned him a Distinguished Flying Cross. Another sailor decorated for valor was Lyndon Johnson. A Naval reservist, he was the first member of the House to resign his seat and request active duty. He served only at a desk in rear areas until President Roosevelt, wanting more information about combat in the Pacific, had Johnson assigned to an inspection team. Johnson was aboard a plane near Rabaul when the aircraft suddenly came under fire and had to take evasive action. Somehow, the flight was represented as a daring mission and, although he was simply along for the ride, Johnson was awarded a Silver Star.

Ronald Reagan also served during World War II. He had joined the reserves in 1937 only after a friendly doctor allowed him to fudge an eye exam. When the war erupted, he volunteered for active duty and saw his pay drop from $3,000 per week to $200 per month. After serving as an embarkation officer in San Francisco, he requested a combat assignment but was ordered to the Army Air Corps motion-picture unit at Hal Roach studios. For meritorious performance, he was promoted to captain but refused a promotion to major, saying that he was undeserving of the rank unless he could be sent overseas. The man he defeated in the 1980 election, Jimmy Carter, was a midshipman at Annapolis during the war. He later served on submarines and would have made the Navy a career were it not for his father's untimely death, which forced him to return home and take charge of the family business.

Bill Clinton shattered this record of honorable service. Not only did Clinton not spend a day in uniform, but—facing the possibility of conscription—he proclaimed that he loathed the military. Nonetheless, the desire for a warrior as president persists. Part of the debate over Al Gore and George W. Bush focused on their service records, and the principal reason John McCain surged dramatically early in the race for the Republican nomination is likely the esteem his combat experience as a naval aviator in Vietnam and his subsequent captivity generated.

Tocqueville was wrong. Far from being little esteemed in the United States, martial valor is an entrée into an aristocracy of warriors and often into the presidency itself.

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The E.U. Charter of Fundamental Rights: A New Totalitarianism

by Roberto de Mattei

The E.U. Charter of Fundamental Rights, approved in Nice on December 8, 2000, sets forth the principles upon which the future European constitution should be based. Drafted by a commission of experts from various countries, the document consists of a preamble and 54 articles. It was presented to the E.U. Council as "unamendable": The charter must be accepted or rejected as a whole.

When the Maastricht Treaty was adopted ten years ago, its objective was said to be of a merely economic nature: First, a single European market would be constituted through the free circulation of goods, services, and capital; the abolition of exchanges and the introduction of a single European currency would follow. Today, the declared objective is political unification. The Charter of Fundamental Rights is a major step in this process, though the immediate attempt to turn it into an E.U. constitutional charter has failed. As a matter of fact, the charter (as Italy's minister of foreign affairs, Lamberto Dini, claims) marks a crucial contribution to the constitutionalization process of the European Union, for it "provides a network of rights around which a European constitutional patriotism can be gradually built up."

"Constitutional patriotism" is typical of the language employed by such leftist European intellectuals as Jürgen Habermas. Habermas opposes *Verfassungspatriotismus*, the constitutional patriotism of rights, to traditional patriotism, tied to an historic country. Habermas and his disciples want to denationalize citizenship, to disconnect the idea of citizenship from that of nation in order to reattach it to the idea of a democratic and universalist constitution. The architects of the European Union identify with this vision. Since it is impossible to found European citizenship on a European nation that has never existed, they want to found it on a constitution—a core of figurative principles and "new rights." These new principles and rights are a postmodern reinterpretation of human rights that constitutes a qualitative leap beyond even the modern formulation ushered in by the Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Article 21 is the core of the charter. It reads: "Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, shall be prohibited."

This article takes up and extends Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty, which states: "the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation." In both cases, a new juridical tenet is being created: the principle of nondiscrimination. As a matter of fact, this principle is the old Jacobin one of absolute equality, reformulated in new language and adapted to contemporary sensitivity. It is difficult to find a term as ambiguous as "discrimination." The very idea of justice—which, in the traditional formulation, means giving to each his due (*suum cuique tribuere*)—implies some sort of "discrimination." A real law discriminates to the extent that it promotes or safeguards some behavioral patterns, seeing them as just and appropriate, and discourages and represses others, deeming them unjust and harmful. Each law is somehow compelled to discriminate by the very fact that it lays out what is just and unjust, licit or illicit, promoting the former and curbing the latter. The pretense of abolishing any form of discrimination constitutes an act of brutal egalitarianism.

Article 21 identifies more than 15 possible discriminations: "Sex" is the first and "sexual orientation" the last. What is the difference between these two terms? Sex—like race, color, genetic features—is received from nature and cannot be changed at will. "Sexual orientation," however, stems from human will and can be treated like such choices as religious beliefs or political convictions. Pretending not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation means applying a strictly egalitarian criterion to all acts of human sexuality. A coherent egalitarian criterion would lead us to accord juridical protection to any sort of moral disorder, from homosexual unions to pedophilia and incest, at least when people are consenting and there is no explicit violence.

Furthermore, any public criticism of a behavior regarded as disordered and immoral will constitute a form of "discrimination." Predictably, any activity or expression criticizing sexual orientation will be banned and criminally and heavily repressed. Will a priest from the pulpit or a professor from the chair be able to present the natural and Christian family as "superior" to hetero- and homosexual "*de facto* unions," without this qualifying as "discrimination" worthy of criminal sanction? Will a religious institution, a private school, or a Christian group be able to dismiss members who promote or practice behaviors they consider immoral, without this being considered discrimination?

Under the pretext of impeding discrimination, all those who profess an objective system of values are discriminated against

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and penalized. While pretending to guarantee (false) freedoms, Article 21 poses a serious threat to (true) freedom. The charter of rights, like any totalitarian regime, attempts to deny freedom of expression.

If we apply this egalitarian criterion to all the "qualities" mentioned in Article 21 (including language and being a member of a national minority), we realize that, besides the family, the state is the main target of the nondiscrimination principles. The effect will be to prevent states from reining in ethnic, cultural, and linguistic strife. The inevitable result will be the remixing of national identity and the creation of a non-state rather than a European suprastate.

We should read Article 52, one of the most pernicious of the charter, in the light of Article 21. Article 52 has been aptly described as "Orwellian" by British Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Charles Tannock:

> Any limitation on the exercise of the rights and freedoms recognized by this Charter must be provided for by law and respect the essence of those rights and freedoms. Subject to the principle of proportionality, limitations may be made only if they are necessary and genuinely meet objectives of general interest recognised by the Union or the need to protect the rights and freedoms of others.

Therefore, in case of "aims of general interest acknowledged by the Union," "rights and freedoms" recognized by the present charter may be limited. The implications of such a statement are far-reaching. What are the cases in which the fundamental rights of European citizens may be suspended, and who will be entitled to do so?

E.U. Commissioner of Justice Antonio Vitorino has stated: "With the Charter of Rights there will be no new Haider cases in [the] future." German Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer, at the time of the Haider hubbub, openly said: "We and our partners cannot accept that a party whose politics are directed against Europe can get into a position where it can block the further integration of Europe."

Haider was accused of xenophobia and Nazi sympathies, but ultimately his fault was that he is a Euroskeptic. Now, according to Commissioner Vitorino, the charter will provide an indispensable tool to corner those who do not identify with the new European values. The Jacobin and Soviet constitutions provided equal rights for all citizens, save for "enemies of the people." The E.U. Charter of Rights seems to protect the rights of all, save "the enemies of Europe," and all rights, save that of criticizing the principles from which it draws its inspiration.

The European Court of Justice seems to have been vested with the task of interpreting and applying the European Charter of Fundamental Human Rights. The jurisdiction already granted by the Amsterdam Treaty to the Court of Justice represents, as aptly described by the French MEP Georges Berthu, a "juridical upheaval." As a matter of fact, the court operates as both a constitutional (supreme) court and as a criminal, civil, and administrative court. When it declares a piece of national legislation to be contrary to the Treaty of Amsterdam, the nations concerned have no ability to appeal the verdict. Moreover, the Treaty of Amsterdam actually gives the court full jurisdiction to ensure compliance with the law in the interpretation and application of Article 13 on matters of discrimination. In light of Articles 21 and 52, the power of the Court of Justice is bound to increase to the point where it becomes supreme. The exorbitant powers being conferred on the European Court of Justice are part and parcel of a postmodern process related to the emergence of new rights: the transfer of sovereignty from the political to the judicial power, which thus becomes the real "superpower" in the rising European non-state.

The Court of Justice consists of 15 judges designated by the E.U. member governments. Once appointed, they form a jurisdictional body that can override the will of the governments and the peoples represented by them. The Court of Justice may not be contradicted, but it may invalidate a legitimate popular vote. In fact, one of the possible limitations of the rights listed in the European Charter pertains to the delegitimization of a popular vote that does not meet the political approval of the upper echelons of the European Union. Therefore, what was not possible at the time of the Haider case may be possible after the Nice Charter has been approved.

Recently, Vladimir Bukovski has highlighted the affinities between the totalitarianism of the former Soviet Union and that of the present European Union. According to the former dissident, this affinity is based on the fact that neither Soviet communism nor the neosocialism that has inspired the European Union acknowledges the existence of natural institutions that are inseparable from human life itself.

Bukovski's judgment is severe, but no more so than Pope John Paul II's judgment of the European Union. On December 16, 2000, in a speech to mark the 1,200th anniversary of the coronation of Charlemagne, Pope John Paul II lamented the fact that the Nice Charter made no reference to God, noting that "The ideologies which caused torrents of tears and blood during the 20th century came from a Europe which wanted to forget its Christian foundations."

He wanted to warn the European government concerning the totalitarian risks of a constitution such as the one produced in Nice, where any reference to God or natural law is suppressed. But the totalitarian spirit of the Charter of Rights might turn out to be its Achilles' heel. The attempt to entrench it in the constitution has failed for the time being, and the fears of one of the most adamant proponents of the charter, Stefano Rodotà, the representative of the Italian government at the convention which drafted its text, may come true.

> If European citizens perceive the Charter as a weak tool, without real substance and binding juridical power, if they realise that it guarantees them less protection than that of their own constitutions and E.U. acts, this Charter will become a boomerang and further push them away from the E.U.'s institutions.

The Europhile and globalist projects to liquidate the state and its sovereignty are analogous to the relativist project to dissolve the family: They are utopian and, thus, against human nature. Society is not a personal, voluntary choice but a necessary consequence of the nature of human beings, who are social creatures. Human society has its own rules, its own immutable nature. This natural order makes us certain of our victory. If we distance ourselves from this order, we will surely face disaster, as we did in the 20th century—the century of totalitarianism, of relativism, of the rejection of the natural and Christian order. Let us not repeat its errors and horrors.

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As We Go Marching . . .

by H.A. Scott Trask

"Let no one believe that children a hundred years from now in the future of America will not be sick for what our fools and unconscious criminals are doing today."
—Robinson Jeffers

The New Dealers' War: F.D.R. and the War Within World War II
by Thomas Fleming
New York: Basic Books; 561 pp., $35.00

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Who has not heard David McCullough pontificate on the "greatness" of Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and now John Adams, or watched James McPherson bow before the demigod Lincoln? Who has not suffered the sycophantic puerility of Stephen Ambrose as he dilates on the greatness of "Ike and his boys," whose mere appearance on the battlefield caused the Germans to quake in fear before throwing up their hands in surrender? And then there is the cult of St. Franklin, whose chief priestess and idolater is the ubiquitous Doris Kearns Goodwin, recently seen grinning like a Cheshire cat as she gushed about how FDR knew that "we just *had* to get into that war." Into the midst of this farrago of lies, idolatry, and downright stupidity, the historian Thomas Fleming (not the editor of this magazine) has thrown a grenade. Fleming has ripped the regal clothes off Franklin to reveal him as a rather sinister conspirator and bungler whose presidency was a catastrophe for European civilization.

Reading Fleming's book, I was struck by how much the author of the New Deal and the Good War had in common with our most recent ex-president. Like Clinton, Roosevelt had great personal charm, a glibness with words, an unerring instinct for political survival, an effortless ability to deceive, a willingness to sacrifice both principles and friends in the pursuit of political advancement, a vindictive streak, a Manichaean worldview, and a strong case of megalomania. Fleming offers more than enough evidence to support the comparison.

H Ward Sterett

When the country relapsed into deep depression in 1937-38, Roosevelt blamed the economic disaster not on the failure of his policies but on a conspiracy of big business and concentrated wealth designed to ruin him politically. Although it was good politics for Interior Secretary Harold Ickes to repeat this charge publicly, Fleming makes it clear that Roosevelt actually believed it, just as Clinton may have believed that the scandals besetting his presidency were all due to a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Furthermore, Roosevelt was convinced that he was the indispensable man. In 1940, he really believed that he was the only Democrat who could save the New Deal from fascists at home and abroad. Thus, even though the majority of Democratic leaders wanted him to step aside, he insisted on running for an unprecedented third term. Like Clinton, Roosevelt viewed opposition to himself and his policies as morally illegitimate. As the 1940 election returns came in, he remarked to a friend that "we seem to have avoided a putsch"—thus equating constitutional opposition to his reelection for a third term with a violent and illegal seizure of power. His vice president once referred to the Republican opposition as a form of "American Fascism." Both by implication and direct charge, Roosevelt and his people claimed that anyone who opposed entry into the war was on the side of the Nazis, just as anyone who opposed the New Deal was a fascist.

After Pearl Harbor, Joe Patterson, the anti-interventionist editor of the New York *Daily News*, offered Roosevelt his services, believing that Americans should put aside political differences and past quarrels while the country was at war. Patterson had been a captain in the previous war and hoped to receive an army commission. Roosevelt treated him rudely and rejected his help: "There is one thing you can do, Joe. Go back and read your editorials for the past six months. Read every one of them and think what you've done."

Fleming begins his book with one of the most famous government leaks of all time, the December 4, 1941, publication in both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Washington Times-Herald* of the text of Rainbow Five, FDR's top-secret war plan that called for the creation of a ten-million-man army, including a five-million-man expeditionary force designed to invade Europe in 1943. The leak of Rainbow Five caused uproar and furor in the United States. Not only did 80 per-

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cent of the public remain steadfast in their opposition to American intervention in the European war, FDR had assured them on the eve of the 1940 election that "your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars." He even persuaded Joseph P. Kennedy, the American ambassador to England and a strong anti-interventionist, to endorse him for the presidency and to deny Republican charges that he was conspiring with England to involve the country in a world war. Although Kennedy knew that the charges were true, he assured the public on a nationwide radio address that Republican claims were "false." (Roosevelt had promised his support for Joseph Kennedy, Jr.'s run for the governorship of Massachusetts.)

The leak of Rainbow Five proved Roosevelt to be a liar, as well as a man utterly contemptuous of the expressed will of the American people. For this reason, most assumed that a patriotic and noninterventionist member of the War Department had leaked the plan. But Fleming provides strong evidence to suggest that Roosevelt himself authorized the leak. The master "juggler" hoped that the revelation that the United States was planning to wage total war against Germany would provoke Hitler into declaring war on the United States. The ruse worked. On December 11, 1941, a week after the leak and four days after Pearl Harbor, Germany declared war on the Unites States.

The leak was the final step in a series of provocations that Roosevelt had initiated in the hope of either goading the American public into demanding war with Germany, or provoking Germany into declaring war on the United States. During 1941, Roosevelt increasingly involved the United States as an active belligerent on the side of England. In August at Placentia Bay, Newfoundland, Roosevelt told Churchill that he was determined that the United States would enter the war. He "planned to wage war but not declare it" and to be more and more "provocative." Just weeks later, the U.S. destroyer *Greer* joined a British attack on a German submarine. By the fall, U.S. destroyers were exchanging fire with the German navy. As Fleming points out, Roosevelt consistently lied to the public about these incidents, claiming that each was an unprovoked attack by a German submarine when, in fact, the American Navy initiated hostilities in every case. However, to Roosevelt's increasing frustration, even the sinking of an American destroyer was not enough to spur the public to demand war. As a result, Roosevelt and his circle saw war with Japan as the only way to get into the war in Europe, and a Japanese attack as the only way of setting these events in motion.

Just as FDR was waging an undeclared naval war in the North Atlantic and shipping armaments to Great Britain, he was pursuing a similar strategy of provocation against the Japanese. In particular, he orchestrated a combined Anglo-American-Dutch oil embargo against Japan which began in the summer of 1941. Yet, while Fleming cites a mountain of evidence to prove that FDR goaded Japan into becoming his "back door to war" and demonstrates beyond any doubt that the President knew that the Japanese were going to strike U.S. forces in early December, he shrinks from charging him with either welcoming or having foreknowledge of the attack on Pearl Harbor. According to Fleming, Roosevelt expected the blow to fall in the Far East, probably the Philippines, but not in Hawaii. He cites as evidence the remark made by Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox that Roosevelt expected "to get hit but not hurt."

Fleming should know better. His whole narrative is full of evidence of Roosevelt's capacity for deceit and betrayal, as well as his ruthlessness and lack of scruple in pursuit of his ends. Furthermore, Fleming's own evidence indicates Roosevelt's complicity. Fleming points out that Roosevelt removed Admiral James O. Richardson from command of the Pacific fleet precisely because Richardson protested that the fleet was vulnerable to a Japanese attack while based at Pearl Harbor. Fleming is also aware of FDR's rather suspicious emotional reaction to the "surprise" attack. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins observed that, while FDR had seemed "tense, worried" on Friday night (before the attack), on Sunday evening he seemed to have "a much calmer air. His terrible moral problem had been solved by the event." He finally had his war. And, of course, Knox's statement could simply mean that Roosevelt did not expect that a Japanese air raid on Pearl Harbor would do as much damage as it did. Fleming simply ignores the compelling case for FDR's foreknowledge made by revisionist historians. He makes no reference to either John Toland's *Infamy* (1982) or Robert Stinnett's *Day of Deceit* (2000). (To be fair, Fleming's book may have gone to press before the latter's publication.)

Fleming does not neglect the important question of why Roosevelt was so determined to involve the United States in a world war when her strategic situation and the sentiments of her people allowed for peace. Many Republicans claimed that Roosevelt turned to war out of desperation. He could think of no other way to end the Depression than by a transition to a war economy with its central planning, massive military expenditures, conscription, price controls, and rationing. While this was true at some level, Roosevelt's motivation appears to have been more prosaic. He was bored and frustrated battling the Depression, and his policies had failed. Why not turn his attention to saving the world from fascism? Fleming's evidence indicates that Roosevelt was a diehard Wilsonian who saw the war as an epic struggle between progressive democracy and the forces of dark reaction. In his mind, it was a conflict of good and evil in which no compromise or peaceful resolution was possible, and the victorious side would impose its system on the world. Moreover, as a megalomaniac, FDR realized that war offered him power on a scale far exceeding what he had so far possessed and granted him the opportunity of joining the ranks of the "great" American war presidents, Lincoln and Wilson.

To make his case for an ideological war, Fleming summarizes a revealing 1942 speech by Vice President Henry Wallace, who characterized the war as the climactic moment in a 150-year-old "people's revolution" that had begun at Lexington and Concord. In Wallace's mind, the American, French, and Russian Revolutions were all part of the same unfolding movement, and World War II was its denouement. Wallace thundered that "the people's revolution is on the march and the devil and all his angels cannot prevail against it. They cannot prevail. For on the side of the people is the Lord." Upton Sinclair made the same point, though less bombastically, when he wrote, "Either the war is a New Deal War or it is not worth winning." In the same vein, Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's closest advisor, explained that the "New Deal of Mr. Roosevelt" was the archenemy of the "New Order of Hitler." The latter could never be defeated by "the old order of democracy" (meaning France and Great Britain), but only "by the new order of democracy, which is the

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New Deal universally extended and applied."

Ironically, Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt's Republican opponent in the 1940 presidential election, shared the messianic vision of the New Dealers, both at home and abroad. In his 1943 book, *One World*, Willkie insisted that the United States should use the war to impose democracy and freedom on the entire world. According to Willkie, the British and French empires had to go, but the Soviet Union was a force for progress and justice. Willkie was the John McCain of his day, a rabid warmonger and internationalist with a tendency to attack his party from the left. He once castigated fellow Republicans for failing to adopt the New Deal before the Democrats. Fleming dismisses him as a "political incompetent, out for nobody but himself," "secretly in bed with FDR," and a "covert New Dealer in Republican costume."

As devastating as Fleming's account of FDR's machinations and betrayals before the war is, it pales in comparison to his revelations of FDR's follies and crimes during the conflict. Fleming condemns Roosevelt for insisting upon the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan and for his pro-Soviet sympathies and policies. Roosevelt thought that insisting upon unconditional surrender gave a moral purpose to the war, but Fleming finds the policy anything but moral. Instead, he describes it as motivated by "a hate-tinged determination to destroy." Fleming explains that Roosevelt had a deep-seated and almost pathological "hatred of Germany" and the German people, much like his mentor Woodrow Wilson. FDR regarded the Germans as innately militaristic and aggressive, naturally autocratic, and solely responsible not only for the current war but for the two previous European wars. (Fleming notes sardonically that FDR's understanding of history had not improved since his C- days at Harvard.) Roosevelt made no distinction whatever between the Nazi leadership and the German people, or between pro-Nazi officers and those who hoped to overthrow them. In his mind, the entire German nation deserved to be punished, bled dry, crushed, and even "castrated" (FDR's own term). He had no qualms about the carpet-bombing of German cities or about the hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths that resulted from this policy of terror. He even endorsed the infamous Morgenthau Plan (drawn up by his secretary of the treasury, Henry Morgenthau), which called for the postwar dismemberment of Germany into four vassal states, the destruction of its industrial plant, the emptying of its cities, and the transformation of the Germans into primitive agriculturists. When warned that his plan could lead to mass starvation in Germany, with millions of dead, Morgenthau replied: "I don't care what happens to the population"—a genocidal sentiment clearly shared by the President. Roosevelt did not hesitate to approve the murderous policy of terror-bombing Japanese and German cities with the intention of killing as many civilians as possible.

Churchill, Eisenhower, and other high-ranking officers opposed the policy of unconditional surrender because they correctly deduced that it would motivate the Germans to fight harder, thereby increasing Allied casualties and needlessly prolonging the war. For Fleming, its worst consequence was that it demoralized and hampered the anti-Nazi resistance movement within the German officer corps. Led by Adm. William Canaris, the head of the *Abwehr* (the German intelligence service), and including other high-ranking officers such as Gen. Ludwig Beck (former chief of staff of the *Wehrmacht*) and Gen. Henning von Tresckow (chief of staff of Army Group Center), these patriotic Germans plotted throughout the war to overthrow the Nazi regime. They attempted not once but *four* times to kill Hitler. As Fleming explains, they would have gained even more support, including that of Gen. Hans Guderian and Gen. Alfred Jodl, were it not for the U.S. policy of unconditional surrender. Many anti-Nazi officers argued that, as long as the Allies were determined to crush Germany no matter who was in power, they might as well fight on to the end.

Lest you think that Roosevelt was simply a bungler, Fleming proves that, in many cases, he knew where his policies would lead and simply didn't care. Fleming provides abundant evidence that Roosevelt viewed Stalin as a more progressive and genuinely democratic leader than Churchill, the Soviet Union as a "constructive force" in the world, and communism as simply a harmless variant on the New Deal. Fleming's description of Roosevelt's pro-Soviet sympathies and policies makes almost unbelievable reading. Here is just a partial list: The United States shipped military hardware and supplies at no charge to the Soviets via Lend-Lease. FDR once admitted that he did not care if all of Eastern Europe went communist. He agreed with Stalin on the need for Soviet-style revolutions in British and French colonial possessions. He ordered the OSS to return an NKVD (Soviet secret police) codebook that the Americans had acquired. He instructed the Army Air Corps to turn over their top-secret Norden bombsight to the Soviets. He refused to believe that the Soviets were responsible for the 1939 Katyn massacre of the Polish officer corps, terming it Nazi propaganda. (When presented with irrefutable proof of Soviet guilt by an insistent American officer, he grew angry, ordered the offending officer to keep quiet, and had him transferred to Samoa for the duration of the war.) He ridiculed and denigrated Churchill and England in the presence of both the English leader and Stalin, to the latter's great amusement and the former's humiliation. Roosevelt also presided over a government literally brimming with Soviet spies and agents of influence (329 in all), including many of his closest advisors.

One particularly despicable episode was his deal with Stalin over Poland. At Teheran, he agreed that the Soviets could annex the eastern third of Poland and impose a communist government on the rest as long as Stalin kept their agreement secret until after the war. (FDR did not want to lose the domestic Polish vote in 1944.) It was vintage Roosevelt. Not surprisingly, Stalin was delighted to have such a fellow traveler in the White House. Fleming records that, after Teheran, Stalin boasted to a Yugoslav communist that the Slavs would soon rule Europe and Asia.

The historical establishment will inevitably ignore or downplay Fleming's revisionist blockbuster. One reviewer claims Fleming is only mildly critical of Roosevelt and that the author's research need not be taken seriously since it is largely based on secondary sources. Perhaps Fleming's biggest sin, in the eyes of the establishment, is that he seems not to be interested in theory, fashion, or extolling the greatness of certain figures who are perceived as harbingers of the glorious present. On the contrary, he is a real historian who has an old-fashioned concern with what actually happened in the past, with causes and effects, and with the true motivations and words of actual participants. c

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Confederate Rainbow

by Clyde Wilson

The Jewish Confederates
by Robert N. Rosen
Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 517 pp., $39.95

Clear the Confederate Way: The Irish in the Army of Northern Virginia
by Kelly J. O'Grady
Mason City, IA: Savas Publishing Co.; 348 pp., $26.95

Fire and Roses: The Burning of the Charleston Convent, 1834
by Nancy Lusignan Schultz
New York: Free Press; 317 pp., $25.00

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As we all know, during the Civil War, an expansive, democratic, progressive, multiethnic North defeated a bigoted and reactionary South, so that government of the people, by the people, and for the people should not perish from the earth. Like so many commonly held beliefs about the war (which are now being enforced as official, indisputable truths), the picture is jaundiced. (In this respect, rather, it is like many other official untruths: For example, that the war was fought for the benefit of the slaves, that Andersonville was worse than Northern prisons, or that Confederates were vicious barbarians who made war on women.)

Most know about Meagher's Union Irish brigade and its heroic charge at Fredericksburg. Kelly O'Grady sheds some interesting light on a familiar story: Gen. Meagher never exposed himself to fire; while, so far from being an exhibition of Irish-American adherence to the Union cause, the Fredericksburg debacle caused a great decline in Irish support for the war. And Meagher was not much of an Irish patriot—unlike John Mitchel, a true Irish nationalist, who served the Confederacy and gave it the lives of two sons. Pope Pius IX, at the instigation of the heroic Confederate priest John O'Bannon, strongly condemned and curbed Union recruiting. As a Dublin newspaper observed in 1861, "We cannot but recollect that in the South our countrymen were safe from insult and persecution, while 'Nativeism' and 'Know-nothingism' assailed them in the North."

In fact, the Northern cause was big on WASP supremacy. The North had a strong Cromwellian streak, which caused it to decry Catholicism and non-WASPS in general. (German Protestants were okay.) And this sentiment was strongest in Northerners who tended toward abolitionism and harsh anti-Southern attitudes. One of the reasons many people disliked Southerners, as evidenced by the sources of the time, was that they were considered not WASP enough. More people disliked slaveholders because of their close association with Africans, not because the evils of slavery. In fact, the most fundamental goal of the war (and of Reconstruction) was to keep blacks *out* of the North.

This aspect of Northern society is illuminated in *Fire and Roses*. Nancy Schultz shows how economic and religious tensions were projected onto Catholic newcomers—leading to the spread of malicious rumors, the sacking and burning of a convent, and the refusal of local authority to punish the perpetrators. (Such things went on in Philadelphia as well as Boston.) Indeed, the destruction of the convent reminds me—in all sorts of ways—of Sherman's progress. Catholic churches and convents in the South went up in flames as readily as any other religious buildings. Probably, Mary Surratt would not have been executed if she had not been a loathsome papist.

All of this occurred while Catholics and Jews were being honored and elected to office in the South by Protestant neighbors. Bishop John England of Charleston was the leading prelate in America, on friendly terms with all the clergy of the community and invited to address the legislature. There were two Jewish and several Catholic senators elected from Southern states before the war, something nearly unthinkable at that time in the North.

All immigrants from whatever quarter (including the North) who had resided in the South for any length of time before the war were regarded there for what they were: loyal Confederates. In fact, the antebellum South, far from being narrow and bigoted (whatever may be said about later times), had a tremendous power to bind the allegiance of diverse elements.

It will surprise many—though it should not, since the truth has always been there for all to see—to learn that the South held the allegiance of its Jewish citizens, who fought and sacrificed as loyally as any other group. Later Jewish immigrants who knew nothing of the war adopted the Union viewpoint in order to be "good" Americans. And so the story of Jews in the South—who probably represented a greater percentage of the population than in the North—has not been told until now. Robert Rosen, a Charleston attorney and amateur historian, has given us a valuable work that brings to light the lives of a forgotten (though interesting and worthy) group of Americans. (I mean "amateur" in the best possible sense of the word, since amateurs are the writers who are able to see things that conformist academics never consider and, therefore, currently compose, and will continue to compose, our *real* historical works.)

Jewish Southerners perceived (rightly) that New England abolitionists were also strongly antisemitic. Abolitionist Theodore Parker believed Jews to be "lecherous" people who sometimes really did kill Christian babies. William Lloyd Garrison described a New York newspaper editor as "a miscreant Jew," "the enemy of Christ and liberty," and a descendant of "the monsters who nailed Jesus to the cross." The catalog of such sentiments among the most fervent abolitionists and supporters of the Union war effort is large, and it is headed by John Quincy Adams.

Americans' historical understanding today is in a peculiar state. While honest, sincere historians are always bringing to light new and interesting nuances to the central events of our history, their discoveries make no headway with the academic establishment (and the political forces claiming historical justification) and never even slightly affect the accepted understandings that, for academics as well as politicos, are increasingly becoming groupthink slogans—indifferent not only to nuance but to all evidence and argument. Still, many fine, neglected works shed new light on antebellum and wartime America and its diverse peoples. The next great subject that needs definitive and exhaustive treatment is the story of the tens of thousands of black men who were part of the Confederate armies. Hundreds—probably thousands—went with Lee's army to Pennsylvania—and took their wounded or dead masters back home. In fact, the Southern soldiers who survived the famous attack at Gettys-

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burg—I am told by a close student of the subject—returned to Confederate lines marked by a multitude of black faces.

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New Skins, Old Wine

by Harold O.J. Brown

Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way
by Philip Jenkins
Oxford: Oxford University Press; 216 pp., $25.00

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For almost 2,000 years, Christians have been confessing Jesus Christ as God and Savior in the assurance that they knew enough about Him to justify making this confession. From the earliest days of Christianity, its adversaries have repeatedly challenged the facts and doctrines recorded about Christ in the four canonical Gospels and in the great credal statements of the early Church, claiming that they were fraudulent. Even from within the Christian community in the early centuries of our own era, documents claiming to reveal more and other things about Jesus than those four Gospels record have been advanced—things sometimes in conflict with the dogmatic statements of the orthodox creeds. Although Professor Jenkins properly calls them "hidden" (in the sense that they have not received regular attention), for the most part they were not unknown but rather known and found inauthentic or unreliable. However, in accord with the spirit of postmodernity, it is possible to argue that the four canonical Gospels became the standard for Christianity not because of their greater reliability but because of political factors—specifically, the Church at Rome seeking to impose her will on the entire Christian community.

What Professor Jenkins deals with here are not attacks from outside the Faith but the works of people closely connected with Christian scholarship, purporting to show how misguided and mistaken orthodox Christian teachings are. Several times in the past few years, scholars at least loosely attached to Christianity have claimed to have discovered the "truth" about Jesus, usually one that refutes the major tenets of Christian orthodoxy. Such writers as Elaine Pagels, John Dominic Crossan, and—of course—Robert W. Funk of the Jesus Seminar have relied on Gnostic texts and apocryphal "gospels" to show us quite a different Jesus from the Savior of orthodox Christian faith. To the extent that their presentations are taken seriously by readers, they cannot help but undermine traditional Christian faith, making it look like one among many ancient religious fantasies.

The phenomenon of Christians employing scholarship to show that Christianity is based on a misunderstanding is not a new one. The 19th century saw efforts to produce a non-miraculous Jesus—sometimes Jesus the Good Teacher, sometimes Jesus the religious fraud (for examples, David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus* and Ernest Renan's *La Vie de Jesus*). Every decade brought new efforts to separate the Jesus of history, the Man as He really was, from the Christ of faith in whom the Church believes. At the beginning of the 20th century, Albert Schweitzer published *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* (better known by its catchy English title, *The Quest for the Historical Jesus*), summing up more than a century of such efforts. Schweitzer reached the conclusion that all were in vain. There is no valid historical or exegetical methodology that will permit one to extract a human Jesus, the Good Teacher, from His messianic and eschatological claims as attested in the Gospels. Unwilling to accept those claims, Schweitzer abandoned theology for medicine and went to Africa as a medical missionary.

For the past half-century, we have been treated to a "new quest" for that elusive Jesus, again largely by scholars working within the Christian context. Professor Jenkins' book takes its title from the repeated claim of the new questers to have found—or, at least, to have exploited—new, reliable, and previously disregarded sources of information about Jesus in the form of noncanonical gospels and other Gnostic writings, sources which in their eyes are more to be trusted than the canonical Gospels themselves. (These are considered less trustworthy on account of their success in edging out or suppressing the noncanonical sources, a nice bit of circular logic.)

Why do Christians engage in this sort of radical reconstructionism, the effects of which can be expected to turn Christians away from Christ and to warn non-Christians not to take Him seriously? Although he does not engage in *ad hominem* arguments, Jenkins (having pointed out that many of the skeptics were at one time confessing Christians) does speculate on the extent to which their "discoveries" might be motivated by a rebellion against their own past. (One was a minister in the conservative Church of the Nazarene; one, a fundamentalist in North Carolina; one, a country preacher in Texas; and so forth.)

While the "hidden gospels" are frequently presented as "new evidence," they were not all that hidden in the days of the early Church. A curious feature, indeed, of most of these "discoveries" is that they are not new at all: What *is* new is the attention being paid to them by people who claim to be contributing to a better understanding of Christianity's origins. On the very first page of his text, Professor Jenkins tips us off to this fact by quoting the third-century Church father Origen of Alexandria: "I know a certain Gospel which is called the *Gospel according to Thomas* and a *Gospel according to Matthias*, and many others . . ." Many of the most important Gnostic writers were well known to the early Christians. In fact, for centuries, many of them were known chiefly from anti-Gnostic writing by early Christians, such as the second century *Against Heresies* by St. Irenaeus of Lyons.

Professor Jenkins writes in a disarmingly courteous style and does not explicitly take a stand for or against the practitioners of the "new quest." But he does show the extent to which they are turning over fields that have already been plowed many times, leaving the reader to sympathize with Origen's lines on page three:

> [Two apocryphal gospels] and many others have we read—lest we should in any way be considered ignorant. . . . Nevertheless, among all these, we have approved solely what the church has recognized, which is that only the four Gospels should be accepted.

For those readers whose confidence in the Jesus of the canonical Gospels has been undermined, as well as for those who might hope to be taught wonderful new truths by the "hidden gospels"—thus liberating them from bondage to traditional Christianity—Philip Jenkins' book is a marvelous support, or, as the

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case may be, corrective.

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One of the Lucky Ones

by Katherine Dalton

String of Pearls
by Priscilla Buckley
New York: Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press; 183 pp., $21.95

Priscilla Buckley has long been well known to readers of conservative journalism. For nearly three decades, she was managing editor of *National Review*, a constant font of editing skill, institutional knowledge, good humor, and courtesy. She had a 12-year career before NR, however, and it is those dozen years with United Press in New York and Paris that are the subject of this memoir.

Miss Buckley was graduated from Smith College in 1943, a member of one of those few classes of women who were able to find man's work in the war years of 1942-45. "What none of us realized," she writes,

> was that because at the height of hostilities nearly eleven million young American men were in uniform, jobs in the civil economy that would have been closed to women two years earlier, and would be closed to them three years later when the veterans came home, were there for the plucking. . . . We were the lucky ones.

It was January 1944 when Miss Buckley went looking for work in New York. She had the good sense to turn down a decent salary at the children's encyclopedia *The Book of Knowledge* to accept instead just over half the pay—starvation wages—at United Press. It was a choice she never regretted. And her engaging memoir is just what her title suggests: a string of her best anecdotes from those years spent covering World War II and its aftermath.

Miss Buckley tells many good stories. In 1946, as the New York newsroom waited for the FLASH that the Nuremberg war criminals had been hanged, the staff was greatly surprised to see their bosses from the business offices making an unaccustomed visit. This was a story that needed to be handled from the top, they were told. In came the FLASH; quickly, the top man wrote the leader that would go out to all UP bureaus: "Hermann Goering cheated death by committing suicide." Then the brass left. As the door shut, the newsroom laughed as someone quickly added a clarifying "by hanging" after "death" to the outgoing bulletin.

When in Paris, Miss Buckley covered the restoration of the Moroccan king Sultan Muhammad V and the transfer of power to him from the Berber tribal leader El Glaoui at a ceremony held at a chateau outside the city. Buckley and her friend, *Time* correspondent Frank White, only managed to view the event through a window, but they could see clearly that, as the 80-year-old El Glaoui marched in and began to kneel, the young king rose, took him by the arms, and graciously raised him for an embrace. Consequently, Buckley was greatly surprised to read a few days later, in *Time's* account of the ceremony, that Muhammad V had pushed the old man's head to the floor. When she asked White about it, he told her he had written what they both had seen, but evidently a New York editor had found the amended version more dramatic. It was the kind of thing that happened to *Time* and *Newsweek* correspondents all the time, he said.

Perhaps my favorite story is her simplest one, from very early in her career. Just weeks into her new job at UP, having been assigned to the sports desk over the objections of its editor, Miss Buckley made a mistake in a baseball score. A colleague, responding to the several complaints from local bureaus, sent out a correction, then issued one directly to Buckley herself at the top of his lungs. "Pitts Buckley, you can call Franklin Delano Roosevelt a g------sonofa-----, but you can't make a mistake in a baseball score!"

This is a book of great charm, funny, and somewhat nostalgic. Though *String of Pearls* is about news and newsmen, it clearly portrays a New York (and no doubt a Paris, though I can't speak to that) long gone. Indirectly, despite the fact that most of these tales are about other people, it also presents a clear picture of the author herself—a young woman interested in the world and amused with much of it. Knowing Miss Buckley's *National Review* history as many of us do, it is still a bit of a surprise to learn that, in 1956, she was glad to give up United Press and Paris and return to the States to help her younger brother Bill with his new magazine. But then—by then—Miss Buckley had reached the point where she longed for family and home. I feel certain she has no regrets about this decision, either. As she continues to write in retirement, a memoir of her years at *National Review* is probably her next envisaged project. If so, I would expect it to make a book as enjoyable as this one.

Contributing editor Katherine Dalton writes from New Castle, Kentucky.

The Study of Wisdom

by Jeffrey Meyers

Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness, 1921-1970
by Ray Monk
New York: Free Press; 574 pp., $40.00

The second half of the life of Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) is not nearly as interesting as the first, when Russell did his major work in philosophy and mathematics and, through close contacts with the Bloomsbury Group, knew all the major writers of his time. In this second volume, Ray Monk picks his way through the trail of psychological wreckage caused by both Russell's fear of madness and his colossal vanity. With scant sympathy, Monk convincingly portrays Russell as emotionally maimed and incapable of loving, no longer dedicated to serious intellectual work, and "astonishingly out of touch with political reality." Frequently "superficial and dishonest," Russell lapsed into "empty rhetoric and blind dogmatism," dismissing rather than countering the arguments of his opponents. In this fascinating book, one of the great minds of the century is shown to have been a windbag and a bore.

Monk, author of a brilliant life of

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Wittgenstein (who destroyed the foundations of Russell's work), has a penetrating intelligence and vigorous narrative style. He has mastered the enormous amount of archival material and expertly exposes the weaknesses in Russell's fallacious arguments. (He misses one logical flaw, however. Russell states: "A hen, when scared by a motor-car, will rush across the road in order to be at home, despite thus risking its life, and in like manner, during the Blitz, I longed to be in England"—though Russell did not rush home from America during the war.) Unfortunately, after working on Bertrand Russell for more than ten years, Monk has succumbed to the biographer's disease, resenting the subject for eating up his own life and becoming unremittingly hostile to him.

The other flaw in this impressive and emotionally powerful biography is that Monk feels obliged to offer a tedious and sometimes harsh analysis of every minor work. Monk states that, in *Power: A New Social Analysis*, Russell's "solutions are too pat to be convincing and, in place of theory, he offers, for the most part, rhetoric." But in 1938, on the eve of war, Orwell, who had a keen eye for cant, admired the book and saw its usefulness. He wrote that Russell,

> like all liberals, is better at pointing out what is desirable than at explaining how to achieve it. [But] the restatement of the obvious is [now] the first duty of intelligent men. So long as he and a few others like him are alive and out of jail, we know that the world is still sane in parts.

Russell, who saw himself as the "last survivor of a bygone age," cunningly combined an outmoded persona with a modern view of life. His skinny body, scrawny neck, crest of white hair, thin lips, weak chin, and curved Sherlockian pipe became familiar throughout the world. In his stiff high collar and waistcoat with gold watchchain, he resembled (though he wore trousers) the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*.

His quaint appearance fascinated listeners during his frequent American lecture tours—which he hated but undertook to support his ever increasing families—and during his controversial teaching stints at Chicago, UCLA, and CCNY, where he was publicly vilified and had his appointment revoked. (Monk, a British academic, rather oddly refers to the University of Harvard and to Haverfield—instead of Haverford—College.) Russell described himself, on tour, as a "mental male prostitute" and, when asked about American newspaper interviewers, replied: "Well, they're not quite as bad as the Japs, but that's as much as I can say for them." His characteristically utopian solutions to the ills of the world were reason, progress, unselfishness, generosity, and enlightened self-interest.

In the age of Einstein, Russell was able to explain difficult technical ideas to the general reader. His intellect tempered by flippancy, his mischievous attacks on conventional morality and religion, his rebellion against authority, both human and divine, and his campaign for nuclear disarmament (overcome by enthusiasm for Che Guevara, he granted an exception for Cuba) made him—despite chronic misanthropy—a secular saint for the rebellious young, who chanted: "Thanks to Bert / We're still unhurt." But when a boring speaker went on too long during a peace conference, Russell loudly whispered, "Now is the time to drop the bomb."

Monk moves effortlessly between Russell's triumphant public and disastrous private life. Russell inherited an earldom (but not the wealth that went with it) and, when convivially inebriated, remarked: "I'm as drunk as a lord. But it doesn't matter since I am a lord!" He also got a fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge, gave the prestigious Reith Lectures on the BBC, was awarded the Order of Merit, and (like Mommsen, Bergson, and Churchill) won the Nobel Prize for Literature for his elegant prose.

Like Edmund Wilson, Hemingway, and Bogart, Russell had four wives: Alys, Dora, Patricia ("Peter"), and Edith. His sexual entanglements were as absurdly complicated as those in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the novels of Iris Murdoch. While married to Russell (then impotent), Dora had a child by Griffin Barry, who also had a homosexual affair with Paul Gillard, with whom Dora was in love. At the same time, the tolerant Russell, after completing his tract *Marriage and Morals*, slept with his children's governess, "Peter," an Oxford undergraduate 40 years his junior.

After marrying Russell, the ill-tempered and suicidal Peter became jealous of his supposed affair with his old flame Colette Malleson, though he was actually sleeping with a married Norwegian woman. Peter fell in love with a homosexual Spanish mystic and hoped to consummate their passion on Good Friday, but he told her he preferred to go to Mass. While Russell and his fourth wife reared the children of his schizophrenic son, John, from whom he was estranged because of his intense hatred of John's mother, Dora, John's equally schizophrenic ex-wife lived with her latest lover in Wales, within walking distance of Russell's house, but refused to have anything to do with her three little girls.

Monk bluntly maintains that Russell "destroyed the life of his son." Though his educational theories certainly had a negative effect on John, Russell, like Othello, "loved not wisely but too well." As Erasmus wrote in *In Praise of Folly*: "For these kind of Men that are so given up to the Study of Wisdom are in general most unfortunate, but chiefly in their children." Monk dramatically ends the book, five years after Russell's death, with the fiery self-immolation of Lucy, the youngest and brightest of John's girls. Though Monk holds Russell responsible for this tragedy, the blame clearly rests with her insane parents, who were unable to take care of her and passed on their madness to their daughter.

Russell quarreled not only with his wives and children, but with D.H. Lawrence and T.S. Eliot, Whitehead and Wittgenstein. Eliot, whose mentally disturbed wife had once been Russell's mistress, thought of him "as the most sadly frustrated man I know. But very highly endowed—so much more so than Whitehead who has made a better career." Other old friends were equally disappointed with his life and character. Virginia Woolf, no stranger to madness, observed:

> One does not like him. Yet he is brilliant of course; perfectly outspoken; familiar. He has not much body of character. This luminous vigorous mind seems attached to a flimsy little car. His adventures with his wives diminish his importance.

Most perceptive of all was Russell's old Socialist colleague, Beatrice Webb. While praising poor Bertie's "wit and subtlety, his literary skill and personal charm," she felt he had wasted his astonishing gifts, "made a mess of his life and knows it." Russell's life reveals that, despite all his intelligence, he was emotion-

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ally limited and morally obtuse.

The paperback editions of Jeffrey Meyers' Orwell *(Norton) and* Privileged Moments: Encounters with Writers *(Wisconsin) will appear this fall.*

Animal Farm

by Jonathan Ellis

Almost Heaven: Travels Through the Backwoods of America
by Martin Fletcher
London: Little, Brown and Company; 304 pp., $14.95

◆

Martin Fletcher worked seven years as a Washington, D.C., correspondent for the London *Times*. Before returning to Britain, he packed up a car and hit the road for a five-month journey that started in Virginia and ended in Seattle. After years of writing about politics in Washington, Fletcher "resolved to take time off to explore this overlooked land more deeply, to travel far beyond the famous sights and cities in search of this little-known America." Along the way, he gathered enough material to write a book.

When a European writes a book about rural America, you can bet it will feature detailed accounts of the nutty inhabitants of the hinterlands flanked by New York and Los Angeles. To the European mind, America is a giant freak show, overrun by philistines, inbreds, and gun-lovers. Like busy little worker ants, Europeans are building a bureaucratic superstate that has very little room for the backward notions of individualism and freedom that many Americans still treasure. Of course, these cultural differences cut both ways. Unlike the French, most Americans are not attracted by the scent of unwashed armpit, and unlike Englishmen, most American men still prefer women over sheep.

Fletcher observes enough Americana to delight the legions of Europe-builders in Brussels. He tracks moonshiners. He attends a church service where parishioners handle poisonous snakes and drink strychnine. He interviews UFO chasers and conspiracy theorists. And, at almost every stop along the trip (save maybe his visit to a Nevada bordello), Fletcher confronts Christians so fundamentalist that, to his amazement, they actually believe in creationism.

Fletcher is no creationist. And he is definitely bothered by some of the beliefs and customs of Heartland America. Even so, it's obvious Fletcher likes a lot of what he sees. He is also honest. In reflecting on one white Southerner's view that a public-housing complex was an "incubator" where blacks on welfare "made babies" and his opinion that young black youths in flashy cars outside a store were crack dealers, Fletcher says, "In both instances he was probably right." At a stop in Alabama, Fletcher recalls an earlier visit he made in 1996 to investigate an epidemic of black church burnings that turned out to be as fictitious as the Loch Ness monster:

> Along with scores of other reporters from Washington and New York I flew in for a day to write what seemed a straightforward story about how white racists, emulating the "night riders" of the KKK during the civil rights era, were destroying the traditional centres of rural black life.
>
> Local black leaders certainly encouraged us in that belief . . . That all happened, however, before the charges of corruption and mismanagement by the county's black officials came to light, and I began to wonder whether the media had not been hoodwinked.

Indeed, the media *were* hoodwinked. And to Fletcher's credit, he can admit to having been taken for a ride by a band of ideological con men.

Fletcher's strength is reporting: It makes *Almost Heaven* a simple, easy-to-follow account of a traveler who wandered from the South to the Northwest. But reporting, as anyone who reads a newspaper will know, is often bland and shallow, weaknesses from which *Almost Heaven* suffers at times.

The main problem with the book is that Martin Fletcher had his mind made up about the Flyover Republic before he filled his first tank of gas. In the opening pages, he writes that inner America

> is an extraordinarily insular and conservative place whose inhabitants consider New York and Washington as foreign as London and Paris. . . . In much of this land even *USA Today* is unobtainable and ultra right-wing radio chat-show hosts are often the major source of "news."

Well, most large cities are pretty insular, also. For every urbanite who visits the symphony, the art museum, or the foreign-film theater, dozens more take a first-class ride to Jerry Springerland. And all cities harbor at least one area where it's easier to catch a bullet or score drugs than it is to find a *USA Today* "news" box.

It's one thing to say that rural America is "insular" and "conservative," and quite another thing to prove it. Countless heroes of the American left hail from the Heartland. South Dakota has given us Senators Daschle and McGovern. Texas hoisted Great Society Lyndon. And Georgia produced Jimmy Carter. Fletcher ignores this. He then contradicts his claim that rural America is wall-to-wall conservatives, by describing first a church service at which Jimmy Carter preached and later a visit to Hope, Arkansas, birthplace of the notorious right-wing conservative Bill Clinton. And the contradictions continue to pile up. How, for example, are West Virginian bear-hunters who use high-tech tracking equipment or Indians with satellite dishes insular? And could it really be that the all-black communities he visits are conservative? For that matter, are all the Christians he meets conservative just because they are Christian?

As a European journalist, Fletcher is what he is. Because Europeans get a kick out of these exotic creatures, he goes out of his way to hunt up white separatists, anti-government militia men, and weirdos who believe the U.S. government is in league with agents from outer space. If your only knowledge about America came solely from this book, you would think the country were flowing over with antigovernment loons. The reality is that vastly more Americans simply believe their government is a stupid, lumbering behemoth that constantly steps on little people while shielding the corrupt and the lazy.

A more interesting book would explore the thousands of Americas flourishing under a political system that is under assault by the homogenizers. It would survey a land that tolerates diverse beliefs and backgrounds. In short, it would have been written by somebody who didn't treat America like a giant zoo.

Jonathan Ellis writes from Denver.

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Letter From Rockford

by Scott P. Richert

The Tower of Babble

The first call comes late on a Friday night. "Welcome back," says Mark Dahlgren, the organist at St. Mary's Shrine, who is nine months through the one year of probation he received for hugging a tree at Tom and Jan Ditzler's farm (see "For Keeps! A Christian Defense of Property," *Views*, April). "You probably haven't heard the news."

"What news?" I ask, dreading the tone of his voice.

"Oh, it's nothing really. The city just wants to put a cell tower in my front yard."

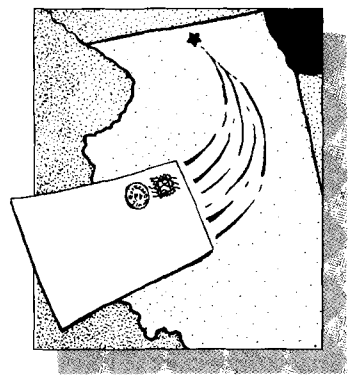
Well, not exactly, but close enough: The City of Rockford has entered into negotiations with Vertical Partners, a Minnesota company that sells space on cell towers to multiple cellular providers. Vertical Partners wants to market 13 sites around Rockford, most of them at city wells. One of those sites, City Well No. 10, sits less than 100 feet across the street from Mark's house; the picture window in his living room faces the well.

"Are you going to help us or not?"

I have to admit that I have no particular animus against cell phones. I have stayed away from them mainly because I do not want people to be able to reach me at their convenience. Still, if I could snap my fingers and make all computers, televisions, and cell phones disappear, I would happily do so. As long as we have them around, however, I would not mind owning a Titanium PowerBook with a cable modem.

Mark is particularly concerned about the potential health risks of cellular radiation and a possible drop in property values. While there is no strong evidence that living near a cell tower might lead to illness, that may be because the technology is too new, and because the evolving nature of cellular communications makes an extensive longitudinal study nearly impossible. I can understand wanting to err on the side of caution, and I have no doubt that a house with a 150-foot cell tower marring its view would decline in value.

There is a larger principle at stake, however—the same one that led Mark to join in the fight to stop Winnebago



County Board Chairman Kris Cohn's plan to extend Perryville Road (see "Not in Your Back Yard," *Letter From Rockford*, May). Why should the Dahlgrens and their neighbors have to put up with a cell tower for the convenience and enrichment of others?

"I'm happy to help, but I doubt you're going to win this one," I tell Mark. "Most people are going to be like me—relatively unconcerned about the health risks. As for property values, if their home won't be affected, they probably won't care."

"What about all those people who showed up to fight Perryville? Won't they come down to help?"

"Why should they? Just because you went up there? The only reason anyone who doesn't live near one of these towers might get upset over this issue would be if the city were trying to pull a fast one. But it doesn't sound like they are."

When the second call comes a few days later, I discover I may have spoken too soon. (By now, after almost six years here in Rockford, I should know that there is always more to the story than what is reported in the local Gannett paper.) Sharon Schuldt, a local activist, is on the other end of the line.

"I just got off the phone with Einar Forsman"—Rockford's city administrator—"and he told me these cell towers are a done deal. Apparently, the city has a written agreement with Vertical Partners. He also said that the city can't refuse to approve a cell-tower site based on health concerns."

"I wonder where he's getting that from? The city ought be able to reject sites for almost any reason."

I mention the agreement to Mark's wife, Cecelia, and she picks up a copy from the city administrator's office that afternoon. Later, Mark calls me.

"There doesn't seem to be much in here. It doesn't mention not being able to deny a site permit because of health concerns."

"How long is it? Read it to me."

It quickly becomes obvious why Einar Forsman thought the cell towers were a done deal. Under the agreement, the city had provided Vertical Partners (referred to as "VRE") with a list of sites on which the company could consider placing cell towers. Vertical Partners then conducted some initial studies and gave the city a list (the "Database") of the 13 sites the company wanted to market. Paragraph four of the agreement reads (in part):

> Within thirty (30) Days of receipt of such Database, the Public Entity shall provide written notice to VRE of any Sites the Public Entity, in its sole discretion, deems inappropriate or unfeasible for use as a Site. *Any Sites the Public Entity does not reject by providing written notice to VRE on or before the expiration date of the thirty (30) Day period will be deemed to be approved by the Public Entity.* . . . The Public Entity agrees to work with VRE to develop alternative Sites for those locations the Public Entity has deemed insensitive or unsuitable [italics mine].

"What's the date on the agreement?"

"June 12. Why?"

"Well, the sites were announced back on June 5 or 6, but the 30 days can't start until the agreement is signed. Still, that means the city council has to notify Vertical Partners in writing by July 12 that it's rejecting the sites. Otherwise, Vertical Partners can start marketing them, and then this thing *is* a done deal."

"But today's July 5!"

"And the council only meets once more before July 12, on Monday."

Mark calls up Chris Bowman, a talk-show host for local radio station WNTA, who immediately recognizes the importance of the agreement. The next day, the Dahlgrens, Janine Schneider (a fel-

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low parishioner at St. Mary's Shrine and neighbor of the Dahlgrens), and Bob Whalen (an airline pilot and conservative activist) appear on Bowman's show, and the lines light up with angry callers who see the 30-day clause as just another example of Rockford's backroom politics. Chris devotes most of his radio show to the issue, and when he convinces Tom Poulos (the president of Vertical Partners) to go on the air, Poulos confirms that the 30-day period expires on July 12, though he claims that Vertical Partners will not enforce it.

Although Rockford is the state's second-largest city, it has often been called the biggest small town in Illinois. Usually, that is meant as a put-down, but over the weekend, the Dahlgrens, Bob Whalen, Janine and Bob Schneider, and Francis Gillett, the Dahlgren's retired neighbor, take full advantage of Rockford's status, calling each of the 14 aldermen. By Monday, July 9, a much clearer picture has begun to emerge.

While the aldermen had unanimously voted to approve the agreement between the city and Vertical Partners at the city council meeting on June 11, none of them had seen the text. All agree that they had thought they were simply voting to open negotiations with Vertical Partners, not to enter into a binding agreement, and certainly not to put Vertical Partners in the driver's seat by giving themselves only 30 days to reject potential sites.

Realizing that much of the opposition to the cell-tower plan centers on City Well No. 10, the Dahlgrens' alderman, Dan Conness, schedules a public meeting for shortly after the city council meeting that night. Tom Poulos sends a letter to Mayor Doug Scott, acknowledging the 30-day clause and offering to extend it to 60 days. Still, many of the aldermen are concerned, if only because the fact that they never saw the agreement makes them look like rubber stamps. Before the council meeting ends, Aldermen Doug Mark and David Johnson introduce a resolution to amend the agreement, striking the 30-day clause.

At Alderman Conness's public meeting, it becomes apparent that we have only seen the tip of the iceberg. First, the issue extends well beyond the city. Tom Poulos explains that four other governmental bodies in the Rockford area (Winnebago County, School District 205, the Rockford Park District, and the Rockford Housing Authority) have previously signed the same agreement with Vertical Partners, and, in each case, the 30 days have already passed. He estimates the number of approved cell-tower sites at 40 to 50.

Second, the federal government has severely circumscribed the power of state and local governments to restrict the building of cell towers. Under U.S. law (47 U.S.C., sect. 332(c)(7)),

> The regulation of the placement, construction, and modification of personal wireless service facilities by and [*sic*] State or local government or instrumentality thereof . . . shall not prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the provision of personal wireless services.

Moreover, as Einar Forsman had indicated to Sharon Schuldt, the city is essentially not allowed to make decisions about cell towers based on the environmental and health issues that concern the Dahlgrens:

> No State or local government or instrumentality thereof may regulate the placement, construction, or modification of personal wireless service facilities on the basis of the environmental effects of radio frequency emissions to the extent that such facilities comply with the [Federal Communications] Commission's regulations concerning such emissions.

While Forsman and City Legal Director Ron Schultz assure the aldermen that they will have to approve each cell tower individually before construction can begin, many of the aldermen are clearly beginning to question whether, under federal law, they would be able to stop the construction. That, combined with their anger over not seeing the agreement before they voted (and Ron Schultz's claim that such agreements do not need to be distributed to the aldermen before a vote), seems to have turned the tide.

It takes another three weeks, but at the city council meeting on July 30, the aldermen vote unanimously to reject the eight cell-tower sites in residential neighborhoods. They approve the rest, though, which are in industrial and rural areas.

After the vote, Bob Greene, chairman of the council's finance and personnel committee (where the cell-tower proposal was first considered), rises. "I would just like to note for the record, your honor, that the process worked." The snickers from the gallery are audible, because the truth, of course, is exactly the opposite: If it had not been for the persistence of a handful of concerned citizens, July 12 would have passed without notice.

As we leave the council chambers, Mark Dahlgren is noticeably relieved, but he is not ready to rest on his laurels. Just behind City Well No. 10 lies Alpine Park, one of the highest points in the city and, thus, a prime site for a cell tower. We still do not know what sites, if any, the Rockford Park District has approved. In Rockford, the battle never really ends. c

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Letter From Rome

by Alberto Carosa

American Handgunners Seek Vatican Recognition

◆

From time to time, the Catholic Church has to address the thorny problems caused by those liberal faithful who challenge her principles and tenets. Much more rarely do we hear about initiatives coming from the other side of the spectrum, since these initiatives generally do not pose any threat to Church doctrine, but are limited to extending the application of existing principles. This is the approach of the St. Gabriel Possenti Society, Inc., which traveled all the way to Rome to plead for the official recognition of St. Gabriel Possenti as the patron saint of handgunners.

The members of the U.S.-based international and interdenominational St. Gabriel Possenti Society uphold the right of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms to defend themselves against evil and tyranny. According to the society's founder and president, John Michael Snyder, this is an extension of the right to life. In his opinion, the Catholic Church, as a genuine and consistent defender of life, should speak out in favor of preserving the right to defend life.

The society believes that a good first step in this direction would be to proclaim St. Gabriel Possenti (1838-1862) patron of handgunners. To publicize the issue, John Snyder, during an awards ceremony in the shadow of the Basilica of St. Peter on February 27, the feast day of the saint, presented special medallions to a select few recipients who have demonstrated their commitment to the defense of truth and justice against evil and tyranny.

In 1860, St. Gabriel Possenti (better known in Italy as San Gabriele dell'Addolorata) rescued the villagers of Isola del Gran Sasso in the Abruzzo region from a gang of 20 armed renegades through a striking demonstration of handgun marksmanship, slaying a lizard with one shot. The renegades surrendered, and St. Gabriel—then a seminarian—drove them out of town at gunpoint.

The society also promotes the study and exposition of the historical, philosophical, and theological foundations for the doctrine of legitimate self-defense. To this end, it distributes a monograph on "Self Defense and the Bible" by a Baptist minister, the Rev. Anthony L. Winfield.

Thus far, the Vatican has not complied with the society's request. While it may be true that some Church officials get weak in the knees at the sound of gunfire (or even the mention of the word), the idea has faced opposition from its very inception. As far back as the early 1990's, the heads of the two Passionist provinces in the United States (St. Gabriel was a member of the Passionist order) strongly protested the idea "on the sheer lack of historical evidence for the incident." More recently, in late 1997, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, launched a public attack on the private possession of handguns and firearms of small caliber, claiming that limiting the purchase of "handguns and small arms would certainly not infringe upon the rights of anyone" and that all firearms "must remain under the strict control of the state."

Over the years, John M. Snyder has been puzzled by the retreat of some churchmen on the Possenti issue. Initially, some of them tried to claim that the lizard incident never happened. When evidence (such as the account of the incident in *Son of the Passion* by the Rev. Godfrey Poage, C.P.) was quoted, they argued that, if it did happen, it did not have much significance. When the Religious News Service in the United States brought this to the attention of Father Poage, he replied that he knows what happened because he has done the research and his critics have not. His book carries the imprimatur of the Church.

As for Cardinal Etchegaray and his attack on guns, John Snyder objected to his theses, saying that, in the United States alone,

> scores of millions of law-abiding citizens own firearms of various types and for a number of legitimate reasons. There are more gun owners here than there are people who vote for the two majority party presidential candidates every four years.

Approximately 80 million law-abiding citizens own about 200 million handguns, rifles, and shotguns, and the record indicates "quite clearly that the ability of law-abiding citizens to possess firearms is a crime deterrent and a life saver." Snyder was particularly critical of the idea of state-controlled firearms, since civilian disarmament "has been one of the major factors leading to . . . government-sponsored genocide in this unfortunately bloody and murderous century." As Jay Simkin, Aaron Zelman, and Alan M. Rice show in *Lethal Laws*, published in 1994 by Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, Inc., at least seven genocides—namely, in Ottoman Turkey, the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, China, Guatemala, Uganda, and Cambodia—were preceded by civilian disarmament. In each case, civilian disarmament was made possible through gun-control legislation.

Fr. Sebastian McDonald, the superior of a Passionist monastery near Detroit who favors gun control, argued that there are three problems with recognizing the saint as patron of handgunners. First, he questioned the veracity of the handgun incident, claiming that Father Poage, though a *peritus* (expert) at the Second Vatican Council and a holy priest, is "an Irishman with a tremendous imagination and a reputation for story telling." Second, he claims that the designation as patron would be misleading. Third, he believes that making the saint patron of handgunners would be giving too much importance to a small incident in his life.

Snyder's reaction to these arguments is that the "good father" and "others like him" are "more concerned with being politically correct than they are with being historically accurate."

Snyder maintains that the St. Gabriel Possenti Society is not a lobby as the term is understood in American law. It does not officially support or oppose specific pieces of legislation or candidates for public office. Nonetheless, the clout and influence of over 80 million gun owners in the United States is undeniable. Not many years ago, a madman in Killeen, Texas, murdered a number of innocent

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customers in a cafeteria, including the parents of Suzanna Gratia Hupp. She owned a handgun, which she had to leave in her automobile, because Texas did not permit the carrying of concealed handguns at that time, and she contended that she could have saved her parents and others had she had the handgun with her. Around the same time as the cafeteria killing, Gov. Ann Richards vetoed a bill to mandate the issuance of permits to carry concealed firearms to law-abiding applicants, and her political opponent campaigned against her on that issue, winning the election. The new governor signed into law a similar bill: His name was George W. Bush.

Alberto Carosa is the editor of Famiglia Domani Flash, *a pro-family newsletter published in Rome.*

Letter From Wisconsin

by Sean Scallon

Harvest Moon

◆

I first noticed it as I drove past, heading for one of those small-town Wisconsin festivals, this one celebrating the largest earthen dam in the Midwest (by their claim, of course) nestled in the *stanitsa* of Spring Valley.

The whole lawn was filled with antique tractors, the kind you might see at a local fair or car-club show. Usually, such displays are publicized in the community calendar of our newspaper or posted on the bulletin boards of one of the bars, grocery stores, or laundromats around town. I couldn't remember seeing this one, but I figured I could swing past on my way back on Highway 63 after spending the morning among the dam worshippers. The *Herald* could always use a few more snapshots.

Returning later that morning, I saw that the display was still there, this time with crowds surrounding it. The Majeski farm in Martell Township was the site of the South Lawn Steam Tractor Days (or, rather, day). All sorts of ancient steam tractors from the turn of the century, preserved by local collectors, were there for those interested in catching a glimpse of the past or partaking of the snacks provided by the United Methodist Church Women's Auxiliary.

I clicked away with my camera at the two giant steam tractors that were the star attractions. One was an old Minneapolis-Moline Model; the other, a behemoth made by J.I. Case. One was set up next to a sawmill display, while the other was near an even more ancient thresher, both connected by conveyor belts that looked like giant rubber bands. Two workmen tossed in wood and worked the valves like characters in a runaway-train movie. The tractors could travel not much more than five miles per hour, but they belched enough smoke to make the belts turn, the gears crank, the blades buzz, and the thresher thresh. Two people climbed onto haystacks with pitchforks in hand, depositing the hay into the thresher loaders, where it was chopped into bits and shot out the other side through a blower.

"This is a special occasion," one of the collectors told me, pointing toward the Case model. "This used to be on display at the Pierce County Fair, and they would hold threshing demonstrations all the time. For the last 20 years or so, it's been touring fair and festival sites in Minnesota, so this is its return debut back in Pierce County."

The Case was painted in the sort of gaudy industrial style that you find on any product made around the turn of century or on an old stock or bond certificate. On the front, above the boiler, the claws of the Case Eagle (the company's logo) clutched the world, while on the side, in bright red, yellow, and cream lettering, the tractor announced to everyone that it had indeed been made by J.I. Case in Racine, Wisconsin. A picture in an oval portrayed the town, complete with the smokestacks of the factory and the homes of its workers next to it. For over a hundred years, that had been an accurate picture of the city, until global agribusiness company New Holland recently bought out Case. They stopped making tractors in Racine, and robbed the old industrial city of 90,000 of its identity.

Threshing meant the beginning of the harvest season, when green turned to gold or light shades of brown. Life has a rhythm, and harvest time is one of the songs we sing. People who plant gardens or farm fields in the spring know that, come fall, it's time to bring the fruit indoors and store it away for winter. Instinctively, they know it—without aid of a clock, calendar, or e-mail message. Just look outdoors. Nowadays, with the absurdly low prices he gets for his commodity, it may profit a farmer to plant nothing, lest he lose money with all of his expenses for fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and equipment, even if his yield is bountiful. But then he would cease to be a farmer, which has happened to many. Those who remain have to plant, if only to live on to see better days to sell the grain that lies dormant in their storage elevators. That's why, when you travel the backroads of Wisconsin at night in the fall, you will see the lights of the combines, tractors, and grain trucks still working the fields well after sundown. That's why some grain-elevator employees may spend their winters doing absolutely nothing but watching soap operas, but their autumns working round the clock. As long as we have fields to sow, the show must go on.

Very little of our agricultural past is still remembered by the urbanized and suburbanized masses who think food comes from the grocery store. There are at least three turning points in American history: 1776 when it all began, 1860 when it all changed, and 1941 when it *really* all changed. Besides being the beginning of the War Between the States, 1860 was also the last year our nation's farms outproduced our nation's factories. But those factories worked together with the farmers not only to feed a nation but the world as well, and created the surplus population that made our great cities swell. That was before the arrival of the managerial classes after World War II, who showed little interest in either farm or factory—and, thus, both withered.

Yet our school year is still based on the old agricultural model, they still publish *Poor Richard's Almanac*, and the urban farmers' markets still survive. And we still celebrate the bounty of the land at Thanksgiving and in the church bazaars, ice-cream socials, and fall festivals. Once again, I attended Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church's Fall Festival in the wilds of southwest Barron County, where my newspaper's publisher is a deacon. Girlfriend in tow, we witnessed the mysterious—if not overwhelming—liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and then enjoyed a wonderful meal of cabbage rolls, cranberry sauce, ham, rolls, milk, fruit punch, mashed potatoes, cheese from the local Clayton cheese factories, and—of course—the many, many pies

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for which I brought a large tub of Cool Whip for all to enjoy. This fall festival has become quite popular, with over 400 guests attending, much more than the little church hall can handle all at once. Besides the neighbors, attendees include such luminaries as former U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson, who is originally from nearby Clear Lake, and Amery Mayor and former State Assemblyman Harvey Stower, "The Conscience of the Assembly" and a friend from the state capital days of my youth.

For the rural churches where I come from, such events are a very important part not just of their heritage but of their routine. As cometh the harvest, so cometh the fall festivals. Whether the suburban megachurches have fall festivals, I do not know. I suppose it would be hard to feed so many thousands of attendees; but really, what would be there to celebrate? They have no tie to the land, to the people that till it, or to the rhythms of the harvest. They are merely a transit stop for our transitory population. The harvest and the fall festival are for those they have left behind.

Sean Scallon is a newspaper reporter from Ellsworth, Wisconsin.

Letter From Corsica

by Curtis Cate

Ethnicity as a Way of Life

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Years ago, an Hungarian friend of mine, eager to finish a novel, decided to go to Corsica to find the peace and quiet he craved. Some six months later, after he returned to Paris, I asked him if, during his stay, he had picked up any Corsican. Not much, he admitted, except for a phrase he had often heard and had found appealing for its curious sonority: "*U lu brutu!*"

My friend's subsequent explanations as to just what those three words meant were vague in the extreme. Apparently, *brutu* was one of those convenient, all-purpose words people—more particularly, the young—invent to express varying degrees of enthusiasm—such as *formidable* in French, *fabelhaft* ("fabulous") in German, *estupendo* or *Caramba!* in Spanish, and everything from "wizard," "super," "terrific," and the latest, singularly weak-kneed superlative—"brilliant"—now used by the British. I was reminded of the "*Que brutal!*" I had heard in Mexico at a time when the *bamba* was first being danced—in 1946, no less!—and which was no more "brutal" in its connotations than the popular English superlative "terrific!"

The four repetitive *u* (as in our "you") sounds in "*U lu brutu!*" clearly linked it to the ancient Provençal, more closely derived from the Latin than modern French, in which the words would have to be phonetically (and more clumsily) transcribed as "*Ou lou broutou!*" I have no idea who invented this phrase or if he could in any sense be considered a "Provençal," but its mere existence could provide a convenient argument for those French men and women who like to think that the island of Corsica has "indissoluble" ties linking it to the "*hexagone*" of mainland France.

Ever since last July, when Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, in desperate search of some miraculous way of "pacifying" the restive island of Corsica, caved in to the demands of certain "nationalists" by outlining a four-year plan designed to allow the inhabitants to "rule themselves" with the aid of a local mini-parliament and to have the Corsican "language" taught in all its schools, French newspapers, like the radio and TV channels, have been deluged with articles, interviews, and speeches expressing every conceivable nuance of opinion—from the forthright refusal to make any vital concessions manifested by French Minister of the Interior Jean-Pierre Chevènement, who reluctantly resigned from the government rather than condone a policy likely to destabilize France and undermine the "indivisibility" of the Republic, to the casual indifference of Raymond Barre, a former prime minister and now outgoing mayor of Lyon, who more or less intimated that, if they so wished, the Corsicans should be allowed to go their own way and stew in their own juice.

Not the least curious aspect of the resultant debates has been the striking way in which they have cut across traditional party lines. In his adamant opposition to concessions that would, in his opinion, lead to an eventual independence and to the triumph in Corsica of a drug-peddling mafia, Chevènement, an outspokenly left-wing Socialist, was immediately joined by another former minister of the interior, Charles Pasqua, who (despite being of Corsican origin) is an equally outspoken archconservative ex-Gaullist. Early on in the debate, two former French foreign ministers—Jean-Raymond Bernard and Hervé de Charette—appealed (in the pages of *Le Figaro*) to Jacques Chirac, asking the president, supposed (according to the terms of the constitution) to be the "guarantor" of the "integrity of the Republic," to throw the full weight and prestige of his high office into the battle against the Socialist prime minister—something Chirac has shown no signs of doing, preferring (as he privately explained to members of his entourage) to see Lionel Jospin "mire himself up to the chin" in a (Corsican) bog of his own making.

The Corsicans themselves are profoundly divided on the subject. At least two mayors—Emile Zuccarelli, the left-wing mayor of Bastia (near the northeastern tip of the island), and Dominique Bucchini, mayor of Sartène (in the south)—promptly joined Henri Emmanueli, a former secretary general of the Socialist Party, in supporting Chevènement; and when José Rossi, a "Liberal" deputy in the French National Assembly and the foremost advocate of the four-year "peace plan," rashly tried to "seize" the mayoralty of Ajaccio from its incumbent, he was soundly trounced by the "Bonapartist" Marc Marcangeli. A scathing critique by Charles Lambroschini, the foreign editor of *Le Figaro*, accused Rossi of wanting to make himself the Prince Rainier of a Monaco-type principality; and in a pathetic plea for tolerance, Jean-Pierre Colombani, the editor-in-chief of the distinctly left-wing and fashionably anti-bourgeois *Le Monde*, sought to remind his readers that it was the "*jacobine*" Robespierre who had hailed Corsica's independence in the early 1790's—actually, it was the anything but "*jacobine*" Mirabeau—and Napoleon who had ruthlessly suppressed it toward the end of that momentous revolutionary and postrevolutionary decade.

The most intriguing aspect of this debate has been its almost classic exemplification of the highly contemporary phenomenon of "linguistic drift." When a "progressive" buzzword is invented, it quickly acquires a social momentum of its own. Before they begin to realize exactly what is happening, even its adversaries end up the hapless victims of their enemies' vocabulary. This is what has happened with the so-called "Corsican language," just as it has happened with

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the equally mythical—or should one say, "mystical"?—cause of "Corsican nationalism."

There are those—such as Alain Madelin, a former finance minister and noted "liberal" in economic matters and himself of Breton origin—who argue that the Corsicans have as much right to have their own "language" taught in their schools as have the Basques, the Bretons, the inhabitants of the Languedoc (in southwestern France), and the Alsatians. What, after all, could sound more reasonable in a "tolerant" country, which prides itself (rightly or wrongly) on its "multicultural" diversity? But even the most "reasonable" of attitudes can rest on a fatal flaw, and there are comparisons which, as Madame Malapropre might have said, are "odorous" and which, when closely sniffed at, give off a fishy smell.

No one can reasonably deny that the Basques, whether they live north or south of the Pyrenees, have their own language—one whose roots go so far back (to pre-Celtic times) that it may even, according to certain philologists, be the oldest in Europe. Nor can anyone reasonably deny that the Bretons have a language of their own—one closely related to the Gaelic dialects still spoken in parts of Wales and Ireland. And no one who has traveled extensively in southwestern France can have failed to notice that, in cafés and restaurants, many of the "locals" speak a language that is almost unintelligible to Parisians and Frenchmen living north of the Loire, which some call "*occitan*" and others "*provençal*." A distant descendant of the "vulgar" Latin which survived from the shipwreck of the Roman Empire, it is closely related to the *catalan* spoken north of the Pyrenees at Perpignan and south of the Pyrenees at Barcelona, and to the *mallorquín* of the Balearic Islands and the *valenciano* of Spain's Mediterranean littoral. But can a *patois* (a word significantly derived from an old Gallo-Roman root word for "paw") which has far-flung connections but no distinctive "center"—unless it be Toulouse?—be properly considered a "language"? And the confusion is compounded when, if only by extension, people begin to talk loosely of an "Alsatian language" and, thus, of a "Corsican language" as well.

There was a time, not so long ago, when Paris editors, smitten by the fashionable disease of "ethnicity," began publishing books of foreign origin as having been translated from the Venezuelan, the Argentinian, the Peruvian, the Chilean, and—of course—the American language. I once had to protest this bad habit for a book of my own, and it was duly published with the notice, "*traduit de l'anglais (USA).*" Other authors must have done the same, for books by Latin-American writers are now properly presented by French publishers as "*traduit de l'espagnol*" followed by (Venezuela), (Argentina), (Uruguay), or whatever country it may be. There is, of course, no such thing as an Argentinian, a Chilean, a Cuban, or a Venezuelan language, any more than there is such a thing as a Canadian, Australian, or New Zealand language. By the same token, there is no such thing as an "Alsatian language," any more than there such a thing as a Bavarian, a Saxon, a Swabian, or an Austrian language. What many inhabitants of French Alsace speak at home is a colloquial form of *plattdeutsch* ("flat" or low German) which is spoken on both sides of the Rhine and which resembles the *svitzerdutsch* spoken by the inhabitants of Bern and Zurich. But what young Alsatians are taught in their schools is not *plattdeutsch*, which, if they chose to speak it beyond the borders of provincial Alsace, would immediately brand them as deplorably uncouth—as uncouth as was Walter Ulbricht, the East German dictator who built the Berlin Wall and whose dreadful Saxon accent was an object of ridicule on both sides of the Iron Curtain. The German that young Alsatians are taught, usually as a second language, is essentially the *hochdeutsch*, the "high German" which was given its titles of nobility by Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller during the second half of the 18th century. The intelligent Alsatian—for this eastern region of France also has its militant minority of hotheaded crackpots—knows that, if he wants to get ahead in the world, a sure way of doing so is to master a language spoken and, above all, written in a more or less "classic" manner by 100 million Europeans. He has little to gain by obstinately penetrating into a linguistic *Sackgasse, cul de sac*, or what we Anglo-Saxons call "dead-end" or "blind alley."

Underlying the clash of languages in Belgium—between a Flemish-speaking majority, centered on the great seaport of Antwerp, and a French-speaking minority of "Walloons," with a provincial capital at Liège (a conflict which has often threatened to tear that fragile country apart)—is the insurmountable fact that Dutch, because of the relative smallness of the Netherlands, never became an international language of the first rank. Had the Dutch colonized all of what became New England, or had they, like the British and the French, carved out vast areas of Africa to form an empire, or conquered a huge continent, like the Spaniards in South America, Dutch would have become a major international language, and the French-speakers of Liège and the Ardennes would have less cause to complain because they are obliged by law to learn a second, "unimportant" language which, compared to English or German, "leads nowhere." Conversely, if the clash of languages in Switzerland has tended on the whole to be muted, it is because the three languages (we can forget about "romansch") commonly spoken in the different cantons of the Helvetian Confederation—German, French, and Italian—are all of them important languages, each spoken elsewhere by at least 60 million Europeans. Recently, some hare-brained Zurichers who had forgotten the elementary lessons of their long, exemplary history began suggesting that English replace French as a compulsory second language, since it was an infinitely more useful means of international communication. But what makes "economic sense" (we have recently seen this happen in Russia), if "unimentally" applied, can all too easily become a recipe for social disaster. The inhabitants of Zurich should be the first to realize that it is the linguistic conviviality of the different cantons that has assured the survival of the five-centuries-old Helvetian Confederation. Because, for most abstract words, French and English have common Latin roots—*assimilation, coopération, éducation, exposition, extermination, fabrication, imagination, répétition, satisfaction*, etc.—French, for German-speakers, is a very useful stepping-stone toward English. It can never be repeated too often: Knowing three languages is always better than knowing two, and the truly "good European"—as Nietzsche liked to call him—is the one who knows Latin and ancient Greek as well.

Nietzsche, who, though born a Thuringian (like Martin Luther), disliked Saxon speech—he once complained to a friend about the "atrocious" German spoken by the famous Zurich novelist Gottfried Keller—wrote that Language was the most powerful instrument of col-

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lective coercion that Man had ever invented. This was both a blessing and a curse: A blessing, since no human community can possibly subsist without a common, collective means of communication; a curse, since this indispensable uniformity of speech can easily generate a constricting herd mentality, which a "healthy" society should be ever ready to combat. This was what had already happened during the French Revolution, with the attempted implementation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "sovereignty of the people": a grotesque conceptual centaur forged from the forcible welding of a monarchical head onto a plebeian body, but in which (in a dramatic reversal of roles) a theoretically unitary body ("one and indivisible") was accorded the divine right to impose its "sovereign will" on the administrative head. It was what, in an even more brutal and monolithic form, occurred after Nietzsche's death with the intoxicating slogans of fascist Italy's "*Giovanezza! Giovanezza!*" (as though youth and "dynamic" inexperience could ever be a valid substitute for adult wisdom and a sure recipe for "national salvation"); and again in Adolf Hitler's Third Reich, with the goose-stepping, arm-raising, bellowing delirium of "*Ein Volk! Ein Reich! Ein Führer!*"; and, not least of all, in Lenin's and Stalin's Soviet Union, where the "sovereign will" of the triumphant *narod*—the monolithic Russian equivalent of the Germanic *Volk*, of the Italian *popolo*, of the French *peuple* (each being, by ideologico-linguistic and revolutionary definition, "one and indivisible")—was cynically used to justify the ruthless tyranny of an omnipotent Party and, finally, of an omnipotent dictator.

At the risk of being simplistic (always a danger in such complex matters), it is, I think, fair to say that every major European language acquired its particular force, character, and "style" thanks to the genius of a handful of poets and writers. (If one includes "prophets" among the "writers," this general "law" is probably valid for other continents as well.) In ancient Greece, a common but, at the same time, "classic" language was forged by Homer (even if there may have been more than one) and his successors, Hesiod, Pindar, Aeschylus, and Sophocles, thus making possible Thucydides' great works of history, Pericles' and Demosthenes' orations, and the dialogues of Plato. In ancient Rome, it was likewise a small number of gifted writers—the comic playwright Plautus, the philosophically inclined Lucretius, the forensically brilliant Cicero, the whimsically lyric poet Horace, and (above all) the epic poet Vergil—who perfected a "great" Latin language which—thanks to the administrative talents of Roman lawmakers, the hardy discipline of their soldiery, and the prestige of the empire, rather than to the dubious merits of its orthography—was for centuries, not to say millennia, Western and Central Europe's major unifying factor. "Modern" French (originally called *francien*), which gradually emerged as a "dominant" language from a plethora of provincial *patois—wallon*, *picard*, *bourguignon*, *lorrain*, Norman, the *angevin* of the Loire valley, the *franc-comtois* and the *romand* of the Jura mountains, and the *savoyard* of the Alps—was largely the work of three remarkable writers: the delightfully rambling essayist Michel de Montaigne, the soft-spoken and unassuming René Descartes (the great simplifier of a cumbersome arithmetical system), and the epic tragedian Pierre Corneille. Similarly, "modern" Italian was largely created by two great poets, Petrarca (let us, for once, write his name correctly!) and Dante, and two remarkable writers, Giovanni Boccaccio (Renaissance Europe's first great "teller of tales") and Niccolo Machiavelli, the stiletto-sharp anatomist of short-term political success. "Modern" English (if such it can be called, for it has retained many archaic features, including a system of phonetic orthography that is second to none in its junglelike complexity) was largely created by the brilliant trio of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and—not least of all—William Tyndale, who did for English what Martin Luther had done for late-medieval German by translating parts of the Old and New Testaments into a rich, poetic language, which makes the standard French translation of St. Jerome's Vulgate sound dull and pedestrian in comparison. Spanish (or, more precisely, Castilian) was largely the creation of a single genius, Miguel de Cervantes, as effortless and unhurried a "stylist" as there has ever been; the same can be said of the Russian language, which was pulled virtually single-handedly up from its peasant loutishness and transformed into a lovely language thanks to the verbal ingenuity and exquisite sense of euphony of the poet Alexander Pushkin.

All of which brings us back to the island of Corsica and its "language." If Corsican were, in any strict sense, a language, it should logically have produced at least one writer of genuine significance. But no matter how passionately the advocates of Corsican "nationalism" plead their cause, this has not been the case. One could go back for millennia, all the way back to the Stoic Seneca (originally an Iberian, who was condemned to eight years of exile on this lovely island during the first century A.D.) without encountering a major writer or poet who expressed himself in Corsican. During the last half of the 19th and the early decades of the 20th century, the far larger island of Sicily (three times the size of Corsica) produced two major authors—the short-story writer Giovanni Verga and the playwright Luigi Pirandello—and, in the mid-1950's, in a kind of mini-volcanic eruption which astounded Europe's *literati*, it produced a Quixotian "throwback" (for, in his travels, he was always accompanied by a servant, and even by a cook) in the noble figure of Giuseppe Tomasi, prince of Lampedusa, author of *Il Gattopardo* (*The Leopard*). Even though the short stories of Verga—the Anton Chekhov or Maupassant of Sicily—were filled with colloquial expressions, it never occurred to him (any more than it did to Pirandello and Lampedusa) to write his tales in Sicilian—for a simple reason that was also recognized as a linguistic "fact of life" by all those gifted Irish writers (Jonathan Swift, William Butler Yeats, John Millington Synge, Lady Augusta Gregory, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, James Joyce, etc.) who preferred to express themselves in English rather than in Gaelic. All of them realized that, for good or ill, English, like Italian, was a major international language. None of them had any burning desire to remain "provincials."

Strictly speaking—and in such complex matters we must beware of the sloppy "thinking" underlying so much wild talk about "ethnic rights," "freedom of expression," "healthy diversity," etc.—Corsican has no more right to be considered a valid "language" than the Milanese vernacular that Ettore Bugatti, the famous automobile manufacturer, liked to use with certain of his close confidants and "lieutenants" in order to keep his latest innovations secret and unknown to his French competitors. The Italians are rightly proud of their various vernaculars, but few of them are stupid enough to insist that any of them be taught at school rather than simply spoken at home, since these vernaculars are all variations of Ital-

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ian. Even though Carlo Goldoni, the most prolific of Italian dramatists (no fewer than 250 plays!), occasionally wrote his plays in the Venetian dialect, it was for him a local *divertimento*, no more. Most of them were written in Italian, and even in French—which, in 18th century Europe, was regarded (rightly or wrongly) as the language *par excellence* of polite society, and thus used as a natural *lingua franca* by another extraordinary Venetian, Giovanni Jacopo Casanova, the self-ennobled "Chevalier de Seingalt," whose "shocking" memoirs are certainly among the most entertaining ever penned by a robust *bon vivant*.

Like Milanese, like Venetian, like Neapolitan, like Genoese and Pisan—and I mention these two because various parts of the island were, at different times, ruled by Pisan "counts" and Genoese mariners and robber-bankers—Corsican is a dialectal derivative of Italian. Last September, Jean-Guy Talamoni, a vociferous advocate of Corsican "nationalism," explained (in an interview granted to a Paris weekly) that he did not recognize the *Marseillaise* as being his national anthem. His national anthem was, and would always remain, Corsica's "*Salve regina . . .*"

I must confess that I feel some sympathy for this point of view, but for quite different, non-nationalistic reasons. The *Marseillaise*—with its bellicose call to arms of an embattled citizenry, enjoined to form themselves into battalions—was written by Rouget de Lisle, a French captain of Engineers in April 1792, shortly after the newly created Republic had declared war on Imperial Austria, the homeland of the soon-to-be-executed queen, Marie Antoinette. It was a typically chest-beating, muscle-flexing piece of superpatriotic doggerel, and every bit as stupid and intemperate as such later exercises in the same bellicose genre as August Hoffmann von Fallersleben's "*Deutschland! Deustchland über alles!*" and the British national anthem, in the second verse of which God is asked to "confound the knavish tricks" of the king (or queen) of England's enemies. Compared to this rhetorical rubbish, the "*Salve Regina . . .*" of the Corsicans comes close to being poetry. But it is not Corsican but Latin poetry that is involved; and the Queen whose merciful aid is here invoked to save the plague-stricken and oft-exploited inhabitants of the lovely island is the Catholic Church's "Queen of Heaven," better known to us as the Virgin Mary.

I know very little about Jean-Pierre Talamoni's religious beliefs, but I frankly doubt that they have had much influence on his political convictions. Corsican "patriots," like those who founded the originally clandestine but now officially tolerated *Armata Corsa* movement (one of whose leaders, Jean-Michel Rossi, was mysteriously assassinated in August 2000) or who swear allegiance to Talamoni's *Corsica Nazione*, keep denouncing the "*jacobine*" oppression to which they have been subjected for the past two centuries by political and administrative "centralists" in Paris. But nothing could be more "*jacobine*" and intolerant than their openly avowed aim to make the teaching of Corsican a compulsory obligation in all of the island's schools.

Not long ago, a Corsican friend of mine, who happens to belong to one of the island's most distinguished families, was informed that the name of the village near Ajaccio from which the family had derived its name would have to be "Corsicanized" (in French, "*corsisé*"). This peremptory declaration was made by a "university" official closely linked to the so-called "Territorial Assembly" (composed of 51 members from 16 different factions) in the "capital" of Corte. A picturesque old burg dominated by the ruins of a medieval *castello*, in the mountainous "hinterland" of the island, Corte is little more than a one-horse town (it barely numbers 5,500 inhabitants), which, a few years ago, was elevated to the rank of "capital" and offered a "university" in an effort to circumvent the traditional rivalry between the northern seaport of Bastia and Napoleon's hometown of Ajaccio, with its quaint, ochre-hued houses and its magnificent crescent-shaped bay. Although tax receipts and other documents obtained from the senate archives in Genoa indicated that the village's name had remained unchanged from the early 16th century on, my friend was informed by the university "professor" in Corte that the ancestral name would have to be changed on the official records "in the name of the spontaneity and authenticity of the local toponymy, the Tuscanized forms being more derived from literary forms, and thus imported." "What those people are doing," my friend exclaimed with a mixture of amusement and disgust, "is inventing a crazy new language!"—in a war of "liberation" fought not only against French administrative rule but against the "tyranny" of the Italian language.

It certainly is crazy—and Lilliputian, too. For all this hubbub concerns the "national" future of no more than 250,000 souls—roughly one 50th of the population of "greater Paris," or of what is more elegantly called *l'Ile de France*. Islanders do not even have enough "Corsophonic" instructors capable of teaching the local vernacular in the island's 44 *lycées* and secondary-school *collèges*. But nothing more flatters the wounded ego of certain Corsicans than the idea that, by occasionally blowing up a French fiscal bureau or other administrative building, or even by assassinating a prefect (as happened two years ago to the luckless Claude Erignac), the fearless Corsican David will eventually reduce the arrogant French Goliath to such a state of fear and trembling that he

Eisenstadt's Kiss

August 15, 1945

by Bruce Guernsey

I dream for my parents it was just like this:
the anonymous sailor, the anonymous nurse,

her head in his arm, his hand at her waist,
on Times Square that day in August

about when my father came down the ramp
and they kissed like those strangers I hope,

bending together, my father and mother,
curve into curve, these mythical lovers.

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will toss in the sponge and grant the island its independence. This would constitute the sweet, long-overdue revenge of the genuine patriots against the *pinzutti* (literally, the "pointed ones"), the sarcastic appellation applied by the "natives" to the intrusive French because of the pointed caps (similar to those of the Redcoats during the American War of Independence) worn by King Louis XV's soldiery when, after centuries of manifest indifference to the fate of this lovely island, they finally invaded Corsica in 1768—one year before the birth of Napoleone Buonaparte (whose ancestors, according to the man who later became his father-in-law, Emperor Francis I of Austria, came from Treviso, just south of the Dolomites, in northeastern Italy).

And after that, what? Well, having created an "authentic" new language and renamed Ajaccio "Aiacciu," these superpatriots will probably feel the need to establish their "national" identity by rewriting the turbulent history of their island. It will not be an easy task, at any rate as regards the events of the past 200 years. For these "historians" will have to invent some ingenious reason to explain why, following the example of the great Napoleon, so many "renegades" preferred to leave their homeland to try their luck in metropolitan France. For, in this respect at least, the Corsicans resemble the Irish. For every Corsican willing to remain on the island, there are at least five or six who chose and still go on choosing to make their political, financial, and (in some cases) gangster fortunes "beyond the brine." One of them is Jean Tiberi, the distinctly controversial ex-mayor of Paris.

Born in France, Curtis Cate is the author of biographies of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, George Sand, and André Malraux.

Letter From Palermo

by Andrei Navrozov

Public Relations

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"All the cars you see around here," yet another taxidriver bringing me from the Grand Hotel Villa Igiea to the congested center of town began in a confidential undertone, "it wasn't always like that, you know. Before, it was all carriages." Then, after a pause that he reckoned was long enough for the average tourist to appreciate fully the historic significance of the news he had just imparted: "Would you like me to take you to the airport when you're leaving?" Well, I had news for him: I wasn't leaving.

Coming from Venice to Palermo as something other than a tourist is a bizarre experience, a little like what I imagine a *Social Register* Brahmin might feel on having to move from the Park Avenue apartment he finally inherited from his great uncle to the most socially desirable building in Des Moines. "Oooh," says practically everyone in Des Moines, "have you seen where Mr. Brahmin is living? That amazing new place behind the shopping mall? And you can see the park from every window? He must've paid a million dollars for that." I don't want to offend anyone, because of course I've never been to Des Moines and don't know if it has parks and shopping malls, but the point I'm making is actually not uncomplimentary. I can even believe that Des Moines is a wonderful place to live. It's just that it probably wouldn't be as wonderful as the Upper East Side, in that New Yorker's considered opinion. And if he's got a wife, forget it.

All this is bolstered by the defensiveness of the average native, who wants to show the visitor from abroad all the things that, to his counterintuitive mind, make Palermo a social and cultural peer of Venice, Rome, or London. History? Before there were houses, we used to live in *huts*. Frescoed ceilings? There is a building around the corner from where my cousin lives—it's got those. Real pretty, *Ottocento*. Too bad they had to make it into a gas station after the war. Culture? We've got the university somewhere over there. Or the *library*, anyway. No, that's the county court. Social life? There's now even a shop open on the Corso that sells *Chanelle*! You know, the French designer. And so on, when what the fellow should be pointing out instead is that the octopus here is fatter, the girls are prettier, the coffee in every bar is better than the best outside of Naples, the pastries are the *couture* equivalent of what one finds elsewhere in Italy, and the Teatro Massimo is, without exaggeration, a world-class opera theater.

The other nearly insuperable problem the *Palermitani* are up against is that in most tourist imaginations—those postcard places where Venice is sinking, Parisian cooking is all butter, English boys are molested nightly, and Santa Claus lives in the Kremlin—Palermo means the mafia. But, as I have more or less hinted on previous occasions, the rest of the world is sinking much faster than Venice in every conceivable sense; and just about every nation, every city, every social class, and every profession in this not-yet-completely totalitarian universe of ours boasts a mafia of one sort or another. Some of these, like the lawyers in the United States, are so obviously powerful that they have no need of violence; others, like the *internationale* of contemporary art with its associated galleries, museums, and media, are so well entrenched that their preeminence is never questioned; while still others, like the Sicilian mafia or the *Propriétaires-Éditeurs* of the *Michelin Guide*, are contented to perform their traditional roles in society, such as teaching people good manners and where to eat well.

"*Even in Palermo* we have the mafia," beamed the *maitre d'hotel* at the famous Charleston in the resort suburb of Mondello, imperiously waving away my healthy and otherwise perfectly attractive packet of cash the other night as soon as Alfredo G— had winked that he was paying for dinner. One can say that this kind of joke would slip easily from the lips of any quick-thinking flunky anywhere, but I would argue that it has a more transcendent meaning here. Social order before everything. *La cosa nostra* is good manners.

Last week, a little girl was kidnapped in the province of Trapani. But apparently the brigands had picked on the wrong baby—a baby, as it were, with the right connections—because 24 hours later, she was restored to her family, her clothes all new and a tiny gold chain around her neck as an added sign of contrition. Nonetheless, that same evening the child's grandfather went on the local television news to apologize to all of Sicily, saying that, if he had offended anyone, the slight had been inadvertent, and that, in the future, he would take care to treat everybody better. I don't think I have ever seen a more elegant exercise in conflict resolution under any political system.

"And therefore?" you may interject. Well, I generally tend to put my money where my mouth is, and just at the moment my mouth is full of *cassata*, the

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nonpareil ricotta fruitcake of Sicily. Therefore, I'm going to buy a summer place here, a decision as irrevocable as it is closely reasoned. I have now spent a month at Villa Igiea, the sister hotel of the Grand Hotel delle Palme, going around with Alfredo and his many friends, one of whom, Maglio M—, is a former mayor of Palermo and an incorruptible regionalist who has done time for not ever having joined the national political mafia, a crime that the politicians in Rome call *corruption*. ("Soon, they'll be putting you guys in jail for not having visited Brussels," I jostled him, "and then you'll remember fondly the good old days, when all you had to do to get along was buy lunch behind the Quirinale for a couple of gluttons.")

My conclusion is that, like Venice, Palermo is capable of retarding social progress, and hence is a desirable place to live. But while, in Venice, social order, good manners, and unadulterated food are guaranteed by the unwritten constitution of that independent republic—by its morbidly inward-looking aristocracy, by its fantastically antiquated and intricate guild system, by its topographic insularity and historical peculiarities—here in Palermo, the same result is all *fai da te*, with the mafia as the do-it-yourself underwriter of traditions, morals, manners, and social attitudes. In Venice, an African immigrant would be unlikely to pursue a local woman, because just getting into a taxi to follow her boat would set him back about $100. In Palermo, he would be unlikely to pursue her because the first guy who did had his private parts cut off and exhibited on a lamppost in his neighborhood, with an explanatory note attached.

Ever careful not to mix genres, I have tended to avoid meeting any of the local grandees, members of the fabled Sicilian aristocracy to whom many in Venice, in particular, are related by marriage. They have more or less abandoned Palermo, their great houses now crumbling tenements occupied by legal and illegal squatters, and it is quite clear that their names and escutcheons count for nothing in a place that has had to survive without them for so many generations. The power here—the power to resist progress, I mean, that being the only species of power I am interested in at this late stage of my intellectual development—is entirely in the hands of the native Palermitan middle class with the right connections. As far as I have seen, they are using that power to good effect, feathering their nests and dowering their daughters instead of building universities and opening art galleries.

Consider the result, which hardly recommends the magical place that everybody around here seems to think I come from. Even though I intend to live and hope to die in Venice, it has taken me 14 months of anguished social climbing to find an apartment to rent on the Grand Canal. I've had to wear masks of wealth, amiability, and crushed velvet; I've had to pretend that I was Marino Falier risen from the dead; I've had to gamble on reputations of friends and plead with presumed enemies. To find an apartment to buy in Palermo, an entire *piano nobile* staring down the most beautiful square in the city with its eight balconies—or maybe it was 12, I can't remember now—took an afternoon. A local architect and his building team are already there, inside the long-abandoned *Ottocento* folly, ripping up the floor and putting in the requisite middle-class appurtenances of water boilers, air conditioners, and door handles. Naturally, we didn't just walk in there. You don't start feathering your nest in Palermo unless you're told you can. Social order before everything. We are *protected*, you see.

"Well, I sure as hell hope so," is all the sham Venetian actually manages to say, between mouthfuls of freshly made ricotta fruitcake.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Virginia

by Marshall Fishwick

New Politics in Old Virginia

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It took 114 years, but by 2000, Virginia had become a Republican state. What brought about such a great change in the Old Dominion? Let's take a look back.

Reconstruction was the low point of Virginia history. In 1865, a defeated and gutted state lost not only its cities, towns, farms, and one third of its territory (when West Virginia was cut off in 1863), but even its name. Virginia became Military District Number One. Collapse, humiliation, bankruptcy, revolution—all are proper words when describing Reconstruction Virginia.

How could this happen in the Mother of States and Presidents—the acknowledged leader of a nation, which had produced the author of the Declaration of Independence, the leader of the successful Revolutionary Army, major voices in the Constitutional Convention, and four of our first five presidents?

Virginians were marooned in what Lewis Mumford has called *The Brown Decades*. There were browns everywhere: mediocre drabs, scorched brown earth, sober autumnal colors. Brown became the color of renounced ambition and defeated hopes. General Lee retreated to a tiny village (Lexington) to become president of a barely functioning Washington College. Matthew Fontaine Maury, "Pathfinder of the Seas," wanted to set up a Confederacy-in-exile south of the border; indeed, a number of Virginians moved to Mexico. Others favored guerrilla war, joining the Invisible Empire of the Ku Klux Klan. Albert Taylor Bledsoe, classmate of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis at West Point, founded the *Southern Review*. He warned his beloved homeland that it was in danger of being destroyed by Northern carpetbaggers and greed. He died in Alexandria, Virginia, exhausted by ten years of controversy. But Bledsoe's warnings would be repeated by a number of Southern intellectuals and philosophers whose 1930 volume, *I'll Take My Stand*, remains a classic.

Virginia's protests went unheeded. Henry H. Wells, carpetbagger and confiscationist from New York, was appointed governor of what had been Virginia. In 1867, a constitutional convention held in Richmond would have disenfranchised 95 percent of the whites and disqualified them from holding office.

Adopting this constitution seemed unthinkable to most white Virginians; rejecting it, however might have brought even worse consequences. Perhaps, they hoped, they could get some clauses repealed in return for peaceful acceptance. That is exactly what happened. President Grant allowed a separate vote on the constitution, the test oath, and white disenfranchisement. On this compromise basis, the constitution passed by a vote of 210,585 to 9,136. The test oath and disenfranchisement clause were rejected, the constitution passed, and Virginia was taken back into the Union on January 26, 1870. But there were still dark days

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ahead.

The problems seemed insurmountable. The state debt soared toward $50 million, and there was no money to pay it. In marched the occupation troops and the carpetbaggers. Billy Mahone, a former Confederate general, masterminded a Readjuster-Republican Parry, rallied native blacks, Greenbackers, Know Nothings, and Readjuster Democrats to his side, won a seat in the U.S. Senate, broke a tie by voting with the Republicans, swept the 1881 election when the Yankee troops left, and got Virginia's debt reduced to about $23 million. But his victory was short-lived.

By removing Democrats from offices and filling them with his new allies (including blacks), Mahone sparked a counterrevolution. An inflammatory speech against whites by Republican William Simms in Danville caused a riot in which both whites and blacks were killed. Now the Democrats had a winning issue: Whites must regain political control. Race became the central issue in the 1885 election. When the votes were finally counted, the Democrats had 145,000 to 127,000 for the Readjuster-Republicans. Democrats took over the state government and obtained federal backing and patronage, which they would hold until the end of the 20th century.

On December 8, 1893, the Democrats nominated Thomas Martin for the U.S. Senate, and he defeated Gen. Fitzhugh Lee in the election. Confederates were enraged. A man hardly known beyond the sound of his mother's cowbells had beaten a Lee. Martin stayed in the Senate 24 years. Beholden to corporations and railroads, Democrats squelched the Republicans and turned back the Populists. Martin's use of jobs, patronage, and an uncanny ability to influence voters made him the state's political czar until his death in 1919.

In the new century, the state's two chief spokesmen were Senators Carter Glass (1858-1946) and Harry Flood Byrd (1887-1966). The tone was set by the state constitution of 1902, whose stringent poll tax quickly shrank the number of qualified black voters from 147,000 to 21,000. Even those who could pay the tax had to pass the "intelligence test"—which gave the power of rejection to the test-giver. Most poor people (white and black) could not vote in a state that once led the revolt for liberty.

It was the Age of the Pinched Penny: No state department of health existed until 1908, when a miserly $40,000 was earmarked to fund it. For years, there was no state sanitarium for the state's fourth-worst killer, tuberculosis. Finally, one was opened in Catawba—with a 30-bed capacity. By 1936, 40 percent of Virginians were living off an average annual income of $183. In the half-century before the Great Depression, Virginia's natural increase in population—the excess of births over deaths—fell by more than a third.

For most of the 20th century, the real power was in the hands of Governor (then Senator) Harry Byrd. His Democratic machine, known as the "Organization," ran the state and defied the federal government.

Byrd—with one of Virginia's finest aristocratic names, going back to William Byrd of Westover—and his tightfisted, pay-as-you-go philosophy made sense during the Great Depression. In a state almost destroyed by debt after Reconstruction, he solved the debt problem with a simple philosophy: Don't spend. Then came the World War II boom, which poured money into Virginia (especially the naval base at Norfolk) and provided opportunities not even dreamed of a few years earlier. The "Organization" moved into the postwar years firmly in control—until an event that would change Virginia forever.

On May 17, 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously that "separate but equal" was unconstitutional and that segregation must end. Byrd fought back. With Virginia Governor Stanley, he mandated "massive resistance," defied the Supreme Court, and shut down many public schools (including those in Norfolk and Charlottesville). Some remained closed for years. But time and public sentiment were against Byrd. He had signed his own death warrant.

Not only were the schools reopened, but the opposing Republicans started winning gubernatorial elections—in 1969, 1973, and 1977. Even more momentously, in January 1990, Douglas Wilder, a black man, became the governor of Virginia, 371 years after the first blacks arrived at Jamestown in 1619.

The real end of the old Democratic regime came ten years later, when the Republicans took over the governor's mansion and legislature. Gov. James Gilmore promised liberal policies on race, education, child welfare, and public services, which would have been unthinkable when the Byrd Democrats held sway. Northern Virginia was powering the greatest boom in the state's history. Half the internet messages of the nation were originating in Virginia, and thousands of high-paying jobs were yet to be filled. The new day was at hand.

But if many old problems had been solved—or at least mitigated—others would soon appear. The new power base—a triangle linking Washington, D.C., Richmond, and Norfolk—left much of Virginia far behind. Devastation in the tobacco market left Southside Virginia in a new depression, and problems with coal did the same to Southwest Virginia.

Anyone traveling around the Old Dominion can see the proof. Whole sections of rural Virginia are becoming junkyards, full of abandoned cars, fast-food litter, and permanently parked trailers. Outside every city, a crazy quilt of pell-mell development and erosion strips the land of great natural beauty. In his inaugural address, Governor Gilmore promised to put history and beauty at the top of his list. Is it too late? What can he do?

The specter of development is marching like Grant's troops on Richmond. Most Virginians are not fighting to preserve their unique heritage and beauty. They are looking forward to being Silicon Valley East, and McDonaldizing every nook and cranny. Virginia is on the verge of becoming Anywhere and Everywhere, U.S.A.

"The earth belongs to the living," wrote Thomas Jefferson, who also believed that the family farm was the backbone of American democracy. Today, the earth belongs to the corporate giants, who merge and mangle anything and everything in their path. As for the family farm, it is disappearing from the scene at an alarming rate.

The Republicans face huge problems. They might find solutions by taking a closer look at Virginia's past and heeding the wisdom of the Founding Fathers, who made the Commonwealth of Virginia possible. They knew that history, politics, economics, and tradition must liberate, not enslave. This is the message—and hope—of Millennium Virginia.

Marshall Fishwick teaches at Virginia Tech.

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by Srdja Trifkovic

NATO Expansion: Harmful and Dangerous

After President Bush's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Italy in July, it is almost certain that a new round of NATO expansion will be announced at the forthcoming summit in Prague, regardless of Moscow's misgivings. The alliance will include Slovenia, Slovakia, the three Baltic republics, and possibly Rumania and Bulgaria. The consequences of this new round of NATO expansion are likely to be detrimental to America's national interests, but the lack of any serious debate on this issue confirms that, in our virtual democracy, the magnitude of a decision is in inverse proportion to the attention it receives in the media.

NATO expansion strengthens the unholy alliance of one-world multilateralists and neoconservative global interventionists who run the show in Washington and who now see the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a permanent tool for the execution of their policies.

Before the fall of communism, America's leading role NATO was not incompatible with a foreign policy based on a pragmatically defined national interest and true to the spirit of the republic. NATO came into being as an implicitly temporary arrangement to prevent Stalin's invasion of Western Europe. It was America's response to a dramatic moment in European history when, had it been left to its own devices, the Old Continent might have succumbed to totalitarian might. Its creators never thought the U.S. role to be permanent: President Eisenhower told Congress that American troops would not be needed along the Iron Curtain for more than ten years, by which time the Europeans would be able to defend themselves.

One decade turned into four, but with the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the stated rationale for NATO's existence finally disappeared. Instead of proclaiming victory and closing up shop, however, the ruling duopoly in Washington has, over the past decade, invented a new mission for NATO: that of promoter of democracy, protector of human rights, and guardian against instability. It was on those grounds, rather than in response to any supposed threat, that the Clinton administration pushed for the admission of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary four years ago. In former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's words, this expanded "the area in Europe where wars simply do not happen." It is important to note that, under the new doctrine, NATO's sphere of operations is no longer limited, and its "mandate" is entirely self-generated. Its war against Yugoslavia in the spring of 1999 marked a decisive shift in NATO's mutation from a defensive alliance into a supranational security force based on the doctrine of "humanitarian intervention." The trusty keeper of the gate had become a roaming vigilante.

In world affairs, this remarkable process has mirrored the longer (and, by now, almost completed) domestic evolution of the federal government into a leviathan unbound by constitutional restraints. The lack of debate about NATO's expansion is not surprising, considering the dominant duopoly's identity of basic assumptions and its domestic consensus. Expansion was advocated in the Republican "Contract With America" and eagerly embraced by President Clinton in 1996. It suited both the globalist "left" and the hegemonist "right" for different reasons but with the same result: George Washington's warning against entangling alliances will now be violated in perpetuity. Reinvention of NATO as an organization based on the ideology of neoimperial interventionism proves yet again that foreign policy is an extension of domestic politics.

NATO expansion is bad for America because it perpetuates an inherently adversarial relationship between Washington and Moscow. Forget the NATOcrats' soothing rhetoric. To appreciate the effect of enlargement on Russia's political establishment, just imagine the reaction in the United States if China were to sign a pact with Mexico, Cuba, and the republics of Central America to equip and train their armies and to guarantee the inviolability of the Rio Grande frontier.

The first victims of NATO expansion were the West's own friends in Moscow. A few years ago, Alexei Arbatov, the former deputy chairman of the Defense Committee of the Russian Parliament, complained that

> many of those who have been trying to persuade the United States not to expand NATO are the people who have staked their careers—and probably more than that—on Russia's close and fair cooperation with the United States.

Those people have been disillusioned and discredited, and the realists are back in charge in Moscow. Their strategic thinking unabashedly relies on a possible first use of nuclear weapons. This threat to American security cannot be offset by any conjectural benefit of extending *pax Americana* to the suburbs of St. Petersburg. The only rational reason for a country to enter into an alliance is to enhance its own security. Even in its weakened state, Russia remains a nuclear power, and NATO enlargement means that its missiles will remain targeted on American cities. While this may be of no consequence to the denizens of Riga or Vilnius, it should focus the minds in New York, Seattle, or Omaha. By extending its protectorate in Eastern Europe, the United States is acting irrationally, because it is diminishing its own security.

There is another geopolitical price to pay for rubbing Russia's nose in defeat. Russia will remain an adversary at a time when its economic and demographic weakness may result in a violent Asiatic scramble for the natural resources and increasingly depopulated territories east of the Urals and along Russia's southern rim. By extending its *cordon sanitaire* around Russia, the United States indirectly encourages the belief that the bear may soon be up for grabs. A coherent, long-term policy based on America's national interest would dictate a very different strategy: As we enter the century that is certain to see a renewed assault of militant Islam on an enfeebled Europe, Russia should be helped along the road to recovery so that it can fulfill its role of the new *antemurale christiensitatis*.

Maturity and a healthy disdain for passionate attachments are needed here, but we find neither in Washington. NATO expansion pleases some Eastern Euro-

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pean ethnic lobbies that never see the forest for the trees, but it will jeopardize Europe's chances of long-term survival. The United States should understand why some former Soviet satellites have a vested geopolitical interest and an even more acute psychological need to treat Russia as the enemy, but it should never allow itself to be seduced by their obsessions. Take Czech President Vaclav Havel, who recently ascribed the Russians' opposition to NATO enlargement to their cultural inferiority:

> Distrust of oneself and uncertainty about one's own identity necessarily generate a distrust of others, imputation of evil intentions to the rest of the world and, eventually, an aggressiveness that may result in the invasion of other people's territories, or at the least in forcing one's own domination upon those who do not desire it.

It is all neurosis, you see; the experiences of 1812 and 1941 have nothing to do with it.

The quote above describes the neoconservative mindset to a tee, but Havel and his less eloquent Eastern colleagues wouldn't know it. They all proclaim their undying devotion to the ideological assumptions of the new NATO, but their real agenda is twofold: to have a Western (read: American) security guarantee against Russia, and to strengthen their own position *vis à vis* those neighbors—mostly Russians—with whom they have an ongoing or potential dispute. NATO membership may even embolden some to revive territorial or ethnic claims that would otherwise have remained dormant. A former Hungarian defense official, Zoltan Pecze, was frank:

> It is in the interests of the ethnic Hungarians living beyond our borders . . . NATO membership does not mean giving up our national interests. On the contrary: it means an opportunity to assert our national interest.

The experience of Turkey shows that the alliance has no means to stop one of its members from aggressive intent or adventurous conduct.

Future new members know—and relish—what Western NATO apologists so unconvincingly deny: that extending NATO into Eastern Europe is a real threat to Russia, and that it recreates the division of the continent that was supposed to be lifted a decade ago. Their fears of Russia may be based on some real experiences of yesteryear. Instead of pandering to their insecurity, the United States should encourage them to comprehend what a few farsighted "real" Westerners already see: that we both need an economically revitalized Russia with strong ties to Europe and a strategic understanding between Moscow and Washington based on our underlying common interest in keeping Islamic marauders at bay. A litmus test of future NATO members' preparedness for the "Western" club should be their readiness to follow, in relation to Russia, the Franco-German post-1945 model of overcoming ancient grievances.

Article V of the NATO Charter clearly states that an attack on one member state is an attack on all. The United States will supposedly provide protective cover to a host of new clients right in Russia's geopolitical backyard, in an area that had never been deemed vital to this country's interests. But once included, those flatlands will become a permanent fixture of our foreign-policy establishment's mindset. The United States will assume the nominal responsibility for open-ended maintenance of a host of disputed frontiers that were often drawn arbitrarily by communists, with little regard for ethnicity or history. At no visible benefit to itself, America will underwrite the freezing in time of a post-Soviet outcome that is neither inherently stable nor necessarily "just" or "democratic."

That Washington and Jefferson would be horrified is obvious; even Metternich would frown, because the policy is simply illogical. It means two things: Either the United States is serious that it would risk a thermonuclear war for the sake of, say, Estonia's border with Russia (which is insane), or it is not serious, which is both frivolous and dangerous. President Clinton naturally leaned to the latter option. He asserted that Article V "does not define what actions constitute 'an attack' or prejudge what Alliance decisions might then be made in such circumstances." He claimed the right of the United States "to exercise individual and collective judgment over this question."

This classic fudge cannot be the basis of serious policy. This is an echo of previous Western experiments with security guarantees in the region—of Czechoslovakia's carve-up in October 1938, or Poland's destruction in September 1939—which provides a warning that promises nonchalantly given today may turn into smoldering cities tomorrow. Over seven decades later, the lesson of Locarno for the Bush administration is clear: Security guarantees that are not based on the provider's complete resolve to fight a full-blown war to fulfill them are worse than no guarantees at all. They are certain to be challenged.

America's curious lead in NATO expansion may jeopardize its relations with some of its old allies in Western Europe. A few wise Frenchmen already suspect that the latter-day, U.S.-led *Drang nach Osten* is a poisoned chalice that the Germans will accept to their peril. From a neoconservative, global-hegemonist point of view, there is no better way to ensure American dominance in Europe in perpetuity than by preventing the long-overdue Russo-German *rapprochement*. This historic step remains the last unfulfilled prerequisite for a long period of stable peace throughout the Old Continent. NATO expansion will artificially postpone it in favor of a psychotic imperial utopia made in Washington that is utterly divorced from the interests, political traditions, and natural inclinations of the American people.

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CHRISTIANITY

Church and Democracy

by Thomas Molnar

There is no documentary evidence of any period in the history of the Church when dignitaries such as bishops would have been "democratically" elected by the assemblage of "voters." On the other hand, popular election was never excluded in the form of *acclamation*. A famous case of acclamation was that of St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who, before his elevation, had not even been a member of clergy. His firmness and his virtues were recognized to such an extent that the acclamation was evident. The Milanese believers were indeed recognized as a decisive factor in the governance of the ecclesiastical body, but not with voting ballot in hand, the way we recognize democracy today. (Co-opting this was another matter, and there are numerous examples.)

Even in the most trying of times, however, democracy and its methods did not become rooted in the Church. This does not mean that efforts were not made. Indeed, a name was given to these efforts—*conciliarism*, the most immediate and direct term that the Church could accommodate. In short, conciliarism meant that the pope was not the single authority who assigns policy and makes decisions, because these decisions and policies needed for their validity and universality the contribution of the bishops and, eventually, of other officeholders, too (and not necessarily just ecclesiastics). The pinnacle of this 14th-century movement coincided with various diminutions of papal power: the "Babylonian captivity" in Avignon; the rise in power of the nation-state; the heretical or near-heretical teachings advocated by certain groups of clerics joined by city dwellers in northern Italy, in Provence, and along the Rhine Valley; and so on. It is understandable that conciliarism received very powerful support from the Holy Roman emperor, from Bavaria, Bohemia, and England, whose interest it was to weaken and neutralize pontifical authority. So strong was this imperial support that it is almost surprising that the councils did not actually become governing factors, when, for example, following the Avignon decades, there were three popes involved in a power struggle. Yet it never became a reigning formula, such as "the king and his parliament."

The possibility was, however, evident. Its chief standard-bearer was Marsilius of Padua, whose attractive thesis found publicity in his writing, *Defensor Pacis*, inspired by the Franciscans and the nominalist William of Ockham. Marsilius taught that Christians lived in a disorderly, warlike situation, mainly because their "*republica*" had two heads, the pope and the emperor. Peace could be guaranteed if the latter gains the legal upper hand, since the establishment of empire *precedes* the establishment of the Church. More precisely, there was a Roman empire *before* Christ appeared on this earth and sent forth His apostles to convert Jews and infidels. In addition, as the king of France proclaimed through his legists, the "king was emperor in his realm." Thus, the pontifical authority extended only to matters of faith, not to matters of policy and military action.

How could one bring peace to Christian Europe? asked Marsilius. The highest authority in Christendom, the emperor, possesses the sole right to call councils, by inviting the pope *and* all those other groups and orders (today we would call them "elected representatives" and "lobbies") that compose his empire. Any interest group or pressure group would be subject to periodic consultation: the free towns, the monastic orders, the citizens, etc. The problem is that the Church is considered an other "interest group," dominated by the emperor and by the machinations of power. At best, quasipolitical parties would form, each focusing on fractional interests. The breakup of the *christiana respublica* could not be prevented.

This prospect was well understood by the "papalists," who also understood that currents of secularization were continuing under the guise of pagan sympathies, the Renaissance climate, and what may be called an early "ecumenism," *avant la lettre*. It became obvious that, in facing the external dangers (for example, the Ottoman invasion), Christendom must present a united front. Indeed, the great philosopher Nicholas of Cusa turned from conciliarist to papalist in the middle of the 15th century when, as a delegate to Constantinople, he realized the threat that a lack of authority in Rome would represent.

When the Reformation came to the fore, conciliarism abated. In fact, the very meaning of the council shifted, exemplified by the Council of Trent (1545-1563), where the debate concentrated on facing the Reformation and reorganizing the Church's internal affairs. During the next three centuries, the power relations were such within Christendom that the question of dominance was hardly discussed. The modern sovereigns (Spain, France, the Habsburgs, England) held their respective churches well in hand, the council was not convened, and diplomacy became paramount. Louis XIV's "gallicanism" was a policy in itself, and the Habsburgs had their hands full with the Turkish invasions. In a way, the eclipse of the conciliarist debate indicated that the "*christiana respublica*" was itself liquidated, and calling the council together was no longer an internal affair. The next great council was Vatican I, held under different auspices. Appropriately, it dealt with theological matters (such as papal infallibility) and, thus, with the Church's spiritual response to liberal ideology and national ambitions. The idea of calling the council together was no longer disputed: Rome had the monopoly of this demarche. *Ubi papa ibi ecclesia.*

Yet this monopoly also suggested that the issues debated at the council were no longer of an essential nature. When, in the late Middle Ages (from Marsilius to Cusanus), the two "parties" were locked in combat, the bitterness indicated a quarrel on the political summit; by the 19th century, "theology" was granted to the Church, but the Church had lost its political weight. The various national assemblies—particularly that of France—passed anti-Roman and anti-clerical laws, depriving the Roman Church of her political and ethical say. And nascent Italy restricted the Church's domain to a tiny enclave.

Is the Church's governance compatible with democracy? Can the Church modify its structure and become democratic, as to-

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day's "conciliarists"—the various critics, whether laymen or theologians—demand? There is no question that, all told, the Church resisted democratization under any political climate—whether under pagan tribal chiefs, Renaissance princes, critical intellectuals, modernist currents—but that She managed to do so by adopting a nondemocratic structure. The roots of the Church's rejection of change may be found in Christ's legacy to St. Peter, but also in the co-opting of the Roman imperial model. The church can never forget that the emperor Constantine saved the Church from the barbarian ocean and, at the same time, from the various heresies by calling the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325). In other words, the rule of the emperor proved to be a good model for decision-making, and the pyramidal structure, an excellent chain of command. The essence of politics is rooted—this is how Rome sees it—in the principle of authority.

Although it seems today that a "new deal" is being prepared for the "modern Church," democracy is unlikely to penetrate the Church's corridors and chambers. The "conciliarists" are more vocal than ever, and their support is perhaps stronger than it was in imperial times. It comes mainly from intellectual circles (the same as in Marsilius's time) whose ideology, however, proves fragile because it is no longer trying to effect structural change within an institution, but the abolition of that institution and its substitution by a lobby. This would be such a fundamental *metanoia* that nobody could control the outcome or even foresee its meanderings. It is more likely that counter-churches will arise, each with a different set of doctrinal affirmations. The new global ideology expects any change within the Church to be automatic, brought about by the *Zeitgeist*, by the weight of international *diktats*, by the "mature" decisions of humanity as a coalesced block. Gone is the precision with which Marsilius handled a concrete problem; it is replaced by sentimental slogans and bureaucratic inefficiency.

The Constantinian principle remains the permanent model for governing the Church. Changes in ecclesiastical policy and in personnel are, of course, conceivable; but, if nothing else, the ruins of political systems that cluttered the century just past show the way to the exit. The projects of this transitional epoch (totalitarianism, democracy, excessive freedom, moral reform, globalism) have been based on the misjudgment of human nature. The most ancient heritage, Christian and classical, has a better change of survival. It should be understood, however, that "democracy" coincides less and less with what the Greeks and the moderns meant by it. Democracy is now generally innovation, fashion, superorganization, profitability—in other words, a mélange of whatever the dominant forces of the moment propose and advertise. This liquid situation permits aggressions against any institution and concept, from nations to grammatical rules. Hence, at a certain level, the Church is also exposed to aggression, mainly because it deals with concepts, their definition (called dogmas and articles of faith), and their permanence. Such aggressions would be successful if the church's governance (hence her *definitions*) were to pass to a permanent "council" with democratic infighting, endless redefinitions and ideologically tainted debates. Recently, Monsignor Martini, archbishop of Milan and presently a *papabile*, expressed his dream of seeing the institutionalization of just such a permanent council in his lifetime. The dream was entertained by Marsilius's contemporaries—and, apparently, it never died.

To summarize a long and unsolved historical problem, we find that leadership—whether democratic, aristocratic, or authoritarian—faces the more general question of how to channel *power* to the mutual satisfaction of all concerned. But as the realities of human nature shift with time, place, and social structure, the desired equilibrium is hardly ever achieved. We read authors as different as the Roman Juvenal, Samuel Pepys, and Restif de la Bretonne (during the French Revolution) on the distribution of political power and social response in vastly different situations, and we are compelled to conclude that some sort of authority is needed to establish a *routine*. Authority is then seen as the guarantor of that routine, until the routine itself moves to a different configuration, under a new authority and its games.

This used to be nearly perfectly understood by the Church, for more than 1,000 years. Inheriting Christ's moral commandments and the Roman imperial structure, She tried to combine the two: Transcendental authority combined with political authority seemed to be the best formula, at least in the Western milieu. The result was the fusion of three classical political power structures—monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy—and this ecclesiastical subdivision of institutions was soon transferred to political and civil institutions. For more than a millennium, the recipe proved acceptable, even ideal. Most aspirations—popular, civic, cultural, and economic—found their place; even the cosmos seemed to conform to the overall valid formula, at least until the arrival of Copernicus and Galileo. But science, as understood after the 17th century, promoted a new formula that opened the tripartite image to criticism and made it replaceable. The modern crisis is derived from that criticism, in spite of the fact that the criticism was itself criticized—hence the political instability of our epoch.

The Church seemed to be alone in resisting the change, concretely freezing Her "political" structure according to the old subdivision. She still finds, however, a large support in "civilian" (political) circles, many of which attempt to recreate the classical pattern. Is there a possibility of a *restauratio* of a society based on authority? Or is the best we can hope for only a remote imitation of a desacralized *Weltanschauung*, which, while it has recourse to authority, places the ordering principle elsewhere—namely, in a *hidden elite*, which resorts to ideologies, demagogy, and ordinary tricks?

The last 200 years saw these attempts repeated over and over in the name of liberalism, Marxism, social democracy, fascism, and any combination thereof. Hardly anything seems to work, because the routine itself is constantly disturbed by decolonization, international utopian ventures, technological advances, vast migrations, economic upheavals—and their mass interpretation through publicity. Even such immemorial institutions as the family and the schools have fallen victim to the modern crisis. The nation-state itself seems to be dissolved, its place taken by global lobbies, or simply by anarchy. *Bellum omnium contra omnes.*

In a book published in 1967 (*Counter-revolution*), I suggested that the Church's passage to the revolution—I meant the modern crisis—may signal the latter's victory. At present, 35 years later, we still do not know whether we find ourselves on its threshold or inside Plato's cave.

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"This Is An Hard Saying: Who Can Hear It?"

by Philip Jenkins

Not too often these days does a church service offer me a moment of startling revelation, a line of scripture that stops me in my tracks. This past Easter, though, I was attending an Episcopal service, when I heard a line—or, more exactly, did not hear a line—that had just that effect. The minister, a recently ordained woman, was reading the famous passage in St. John's gospel that describes the disciples gathering in great fear after the Crucifixion. She read how "the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked. Jesus came and stood among them and said 'Peace be with you'" (John 20:19). Though the words were familiar, something sounded wrong and, indeed, *was* wrong. What the minister had done was to omit the few words that described just *why* the doors were locked: "for fear of the Jews." She had edited a scriptural reading in order to remove an unpalatable phrase, a hard saying. That's right: She was censoring the New Testament.

In making this omission, she had committed two errors, one substantial in its implications, the other incalculable. On the lesser count, what we might call the venial sin, she was succumbing to a misleading and pejorative historical interpretation of Christian origins. But worse, she was responding to this problem by consciously changing the biblical text to mesh with her political preconceptions. If this were an isolated misdeed by one turbulent priest, I would not be too alarmed, but I am afraid that her omission is a token of a significant trend in contemporary Christianity and of the way modern people read—and misread—the Bible.

In the instance I am describing, the motives for the minister's change are clear enough. She evidently shares a common cultural assumption about the roots of antisemitism, a view that can be expressed as a (rather dubious) sequence of propositions. According to this view, antisemitism is a central flaw of Western culture, which reached its logical culmination in the Nazi genocide; second, antisemitism is a direct outgrowth of Christianity, and of Christian hatred of Jews; and third, Christian antisemitism has its roots in the text of Scripture. When the evangelist Matthew had the Jewish crowd cry, "His blood be upon us and on our children," that sentiment became a self-fulfilling prophecy that was fully realized in the 1940's. This perceived chain of causation, this link between the New Testament and the death camps, has recently gained a mass audience through James Carroll's best-selling book, *Constantine's Sword*.

In the aftermath of the Nazi genocide, it would have been amazing if Christians had not felt a fundamental obligation to atone for an anti-Jewish heritage and to purge any such elements from the faith. Only as late as 1959 did Pope John XXIII change the language of the ancient prayer in the Good Friday liturgy, in which Roman Catholics prayed each year for the conversion of "the perfidious Jews." Christian-Jewish relations are a very delicate matter, and New Testament passages like John 20 are embarrassing for many believers.

Yet the argument presented by Carroll and others is open to attack from many sides. Most questionable is the connection between the medieval Christian tradition of anti-Jewish activism and the very different ideology of the Nazis. A vital distinction exists between anti-Judaism (hostility to the Jewish religion) and the much later and more lethal racial doctrine of antisemitism. Almost certainly, every so-called antisemitic passage in the New Testament was written by someone of pure Jewish descent, including St. John, St. Matthew, and the apostle Paul. All these writers, moreover, were as thoroughly suffused with the Jewish learning of the day as were any of their great rabbinic contemporaries. They denied the truth of the Jewish religion of their day, but insofar as they could have understood the concept of antisemitism, they would probably have described it under a blanket term like "the works of Satan" or "Antichrist." A direct historical highway simply does not lead from the evangelists to Auschwitz.

The passage in John 20 records an undeniable historical fact—namely, the hostility between mainstream Jews and the deviant sect of the Nazarenes—and there is no reason why the phrase should not be read. But what was striking about the Easter service I attended was not just that the minister clearly hates the words "for fear of the Jews," but that she felt free to exclude them from public reading. What was being censored on this occasion was not the liturgy, not the customary rhetoric of sermons and pulpit exhortations, but the language of Scripture itself. She was rewriting the Bible to her taste.

This kind of biblical rewriting is not entirely new, but it has always been a very radical step, the last resort of the fanatic. Throughout Christian history, competing factions have responded to difficult biblical texts in a number of ways, but rarely by actually changing them. Adding to or subtracting from the Bible text was considered a dreadful sin, one that probably involved heresy. Knowing this, factions made their polemical points by means of creative translations. Even the most freakishly deviant versions of the Bible—such as that offered by the Jehovah's Witnesses—claim, however questionably, to be retranslating rather than rewriting. For even the most marginal of Christians, the Bible is—to coin a phrase—holy writ. Often, too, committed activists tried to explain away inconvenient readings, to make them symbolic or "merely spiritual" in nature, or (better yet) to ignore them altogether. In trying to explain away the numerous scriptural references to the pleasures of wine, temperance advocates produced a body of exegesis that is ingenious, occasionally hilarious, and seldom convincing—but at least they tried to confront the issue.

Much rarer, at least since the days of the early Church, have been explicit revisions of the biblical text, aimed at purging the "hard sayings." Certainly, some such attempts have been made, including the splendidly wrongheaded Jefferson Bible of 1816. What Jefferson did was to remove supernatural elements from the New Testament, to present Jesus as a fine moral teacher, whose career ended tragically with His Crucifixion. The book is fascinating both as an insight into the thought of a great American, and as a commemoration of the radical deist religion of its time, but it is far removed from any orthodox concept of Christianity. Equally bizarre—and far more sinister—was the attempt of the sadly misnamed "German Christian" sect under Hitler, which wanted to eradicate the whole Old Testament from the Bible.

For perhaps 1,800 years, the assumption has been that anyone purporting to speak within the Christian tradition must deal with the biblical text as it stands, whether they like that text or not. Yet, within the last 30 years or so, that idea has been transformed, so that people like my

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Episcopal minister feel free to edit the text, even in liturgical reading. There are several reasons for this development. One factor has been purely commercial, namely, the huge proliferation of new Bible versions, aimed at every conceivable segment of what publishers know to be a vast market. There are Bibles for women, for men, for teens, for African-Americans, for Hispanics; we have the Recovery Bible, the Life Application Bible, several Twelve-Step Bibles, Bibles for every possible level of reading and comprehension. All put the text into accessible forms, most use paraphrases, and usually the editors of these texts—or, rather, the "authors"—have no qualms about straying from the intended sense of the originals. Most, also, fail to distinguish between the biblical text and the commentary, and only an alert reader can spot the fine line separating the two. As a result, you can find 50 possible translations (or paraphrases) of any given verse, and for even the hardest of sayings, at least a few of these possibilities will offer an interpretation that is not too terrifying or inconvenient. So why not pick one you like?

Most of these "translations" have no particular ideological bent, but we are on very different ground with modern biblical versions that try to accommodate some interest group or other. The best examples are the new versions of Scripture that claim to be "gender" neutral, to avoid appearing to exclude women from the Church. In some cases, they provide a valuable corrective to older translations that unjustifiably assumed that every general statement in the Bible must refer to men, rather than mankind. But commonly, "gender"-neutral translations simply are not translations, in the sense of trying to convey the meaning of what an original author meant to say. The Lord's Prayer begins with "Our Father," not "Heavenly Parent" or anything similarly banal, and any "gender"-neutral "translation" is simply wrong. Today, though, the criterion for translation demands more than technical accuracy: A translation is acceptable if it fits what we are prepared to hear, and that is an alarming precedent.

We can predict exactly which passages are going to be under attack in the Bibles of coming years, the phrases which (like "for fear of the Jews") are going to retreat into footnotes, there to be explicated unto death, and perhaps to vanish altogether. Anything seemingly antisemitic will be first, to be followed by anything about homosexuality. As the years go by, we should watch closely what happens to the condemnation of "homosexuals" in verses like 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10. We should also trace the fate of words like "husband" and "wife." Within a decade or two, these words might sound as obsolete as, say, fireman or stewardess, words that already produce embarrassed giggles when encountered by a modern film audience. Our present domestic terms will soon be on their way out of new Bible "translations," replaced by something less biased towards heterosexuality, something like—what? "Life-partners"? It's anybody's guess.

Usually, the motives for these textual changes seem praiseworthy: the Episcopal cleric just wanted to avoid saying anything that might be hurtful to Jews. But once the biblical text becomes malleable, there are no limits to the ideological slants that can be imposed upon it. Today, the pressure comes from liberals, feminists, and gay activists; tomorrow, though, we might have racial nationalists trying to rewrite the Bible to uphold their own positions. Perhaps they might like to make *more* explicit and polemical the apostolic condemnations of the evils of Judaism, or to offer a more fervent attack on homosexuality. However powerful the temptation to play with the scriptural text, partisan editing of the Bible is a very dangerous process, and fighting the practice is in everybody's interest.

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Oriental Fumin'

by J.G. Jatras

It was not what we have come to expect when John Paul II arrives in a Christian country—or in any country, for that matter. In place of adoring crowds lining the streets along which the popemobile made its stately progress, there were scattered groups of demonstrators hurling imprecations both angry and somewhat bizarre: "arch-heretic, two-horned, grotesque monster of Rome." Was something lost in the translation?

These words, often quoted in the Western media, were those of a parish priest, presumably more moderate than the monastic zealots who constituted the core of the antipapal reaction to John Paul's historic pilgrimage to Greece. Some Roman Catholics—particularly conservatives who, like John Paul himself, are generally favorable toward the Orthodox East—were at least as puzzled as they were offended. All right, they figured, we could understand protests from the usual bunch of communists, feminists, and sodomites. But monks? And he even apologized! What more do you people want?

To begin with, let's get the part about the apology out of the way. Frankly, I wish he hadn't extended it, and not only because apologies to every group with an ax to grind have become the order of the day, with Bill Clinton the universally recognized master emeritus. (By contrast, John Paul, we can be sure, was sincere.) Saying "I'm sorry" for something he did not personally do not only is beneath his pontifical dignity, but serves to evoke a sappy emotional response on the part of some Orthodox that obscures the real points of division. (While we're on the apology issue, let me add a footnote: If Rome really is sorry for 1204 and all that, how about giving us back some of the loot—notably, the relics those sticky-fingered Frangoi grabbed and which now hallow virtually every major cathedral in Western Europe. If you break into my house, trash the place, steal all my stuff, and then apologize, isn't it reasonable for me to reply: "OK, but how about giving me back my VCR and my toaster?" Dibs on the Shroud of Turin!)

The more profound significance of the Greek reaction is that it is finally beginning to dawn on those decent Roman Catholics who see the Orthodox as natural allies in an immoral, neopagan world that sacramental union between Eastern and Western Christianity is not in the cards anytime soon—even if they do not fully understand why. As one commentator describing himself as "a Roman Catholic admirer of Orthodoxy" lamented:

> Isn't working closely to combat the functional nihilism that accompanies the spread of consumerist values a more pressing concern than fussing over the fate of the Filioque clause? The pope knows that the key question in the era of postmodernism and globalization is not what brand of Christianity the world will follow; it is whether the

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world will follow Christianity at all.

Well, setting aside Orthodox suspicions that papal supremacy is likely to remain less negotiable than other differences, and that any prospective union would mean, as it always has in the past, Orthodox subordination to Rome, and therefore precisely a question of what brand of Christianity the union produces, this seeming indifference to dogmatic questions is indicative of how little the West understands the East. Some of the over-the-top Greek rhetoric obscured the fact that, for many Orthodox, "*Filioque*" (not to mention "Vicar of Christ") is still fightin' words. Catholic ecumenists may prefer to think the vehement anti-Romanism of doctrinally and morally conservative Orthodox is simply the mark of retrogrades and obscurantists (oh, flatterers!), and they are entitled to their opinion. They may console themselves with the notion that the Orthodox simply have not come to terms with modernism or, as has been suggested by some (both Catholic and Orthodox), have not even noticed it. To which I reply: Oh, we've noticed modernism all right; it's just that we don't like it very much. In fact, Orthodoxy in the last century alone has suffered at its hands to an extent the Western confessions can scarcely imagine. But it is hard for conservative Roman Catholics to understand that, from our perspective, Rome (and not just post-Vatican II) is not an antidote to modernism but part of it, John Paul's own moral witness on some important issues notwithstanding. (One very important distinction should be noted here. Some Roman Catholics who pass for moral "conservatives" nowadays, mostly because they are pro-life, have long since made their peace with modernism up to Vatican II and beyond. Some of the "conservatives" who make a point of hailing John Paul II, perhaps mistakenly, as one of their own barely conceal their underlying disdain for what they see as Orthodox backwardness. Their interest in the East does not, I believe, extend much beyond an urge to devour us. More tragic, at least from the Orthodox perspective, are those truly conservative exemplars of the best of the Roman Catholic tradition who, like some of their Protestant counterparts, desire reconciliation with East precisely because they see our backwardness for what it is: loyalty to the ancient traditions. But they are caught in a circle that cannot be squared: If they think Dostoevsky's parable of the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov* is just about socialism, they had better read it again.)

Part of the reason for Catholic ecumenists' incomprehension is that their understanding of Orthodoxy is derived almost exclusively from contacts with Orthodox ecumenists, too many of whom are exactly the type of Eastern-rite Episcopalians (in the Bishop Spong sense) that Rome would end up with if there were a union. Any foreseeable union would cause a schism in our Church, and Rome would mostly find itself in communion with people who, as much or more than Catholic modernists, want nothing so much as the approval of a godless world. There are exceptions, of course, but Catholics should ask themselves: If these Orthodox are willing to unite with Catholics professing views on authority in the Church, the *Filioque*, etc., that run counter to their own tradition, how pro-life would they turn out to be? Those Catholics who see union as a means to reinforce the best elements in their own confession might find that it leads to the exact opposite.

In sum, the Greek trip was a big setback for John Paul II's well-known desire to go to Russia, and prospects for union during his pontificate are virtually dead. Even as far as his own agenda is concerned, it was almost entirely counterproductive. Try to see it from the perspective of real Orthodox Greeks: the Church of Greece, which knew he wanted to advance his ecumenical agenda, did not want him to come. So the socialist government (pro-abortion, pro-homosexual, pro-"Europe") preempts the Greek Church by inviting John Paul as a head of state. And then he doesn't expect to be received as a political figure? When you sincerely court someone and the answer is "no," why force your attentions? Isn't this just asking for things to get ugly, notwithstanding efforts by the Greek hierarchy to strike a note of civility during the visit itself? On this Rome—probably not the Pope himself but his diplomats—has made an unfortunate blunder.

From the Orthodox perspective, we can unite with Roman Catholicism when, and only when, what we sincerely regard as the latter's errors of the past millennium are rejected, and the former patriarchate of the old imperial capital returns to Orthodoxy. No one expects that to happen anytime soon. Trying to force the issue by dismissing the disagreements as so much fussing, and by placing unity above truth, is an insult to faithful Catholics and Orthodox alike. Better that we accept that we fundamentally disagree on important matters of faith but can still—and must—cooperate on moral and cultural issues.

The primate of the Greek Church, Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens, made that appeal in his meeting with John Paul II, stating that

> the time has come for us to co-ordinate our efforts to assure that Europe remains a Christian land, away from the apparent tendency to transform her nations into atheist states, denying their Christian identity.

Likewise, there is little for any Roman Catholic or Protestant worthy of his own tradition to disagree within the social concept published by the Moscow patriarchate in August 2000. Serious Christians of various confessions have plenty of reasons to view one another as friends and comrades in the twilight struggle against the modern social pathologies and their effects, exemplified by the demographic crisis that threatens all of Christian Europe. If moral alliance, not Eucharistic unity, were the focus of the Pope's eastern policy, even many Orthodox zealots would be receptive. But his Greek pilgrimage, however well-intentioned, was not the way to go about it.

J.G. Jatras, an occasional contributor, writes from Virginia. His disturbing resemblance to certain monks seen in news photos of the Pope's visit to Greece is purely coincidental.

THE OLD REPUBLIC

The Dangerous Myth of American Exceptionalism

by Joseph E. Fallon

One thing that distinguishes the French from the Americans is that the French have the good grace to number their failed political experiments—two kingdoms, two empires, and five republics.

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Americans, on the other hand, profess "American exceptionalism." They assert that the United States is unique among the countries of the world because she alone has successfully functioned under the same Constitution for more than 200 years. According to "American exceptionalism," the government of the United States has never been overthrown, and the U.S. Constitution has never been changed—except through the amendment process, as established by the Constitutional Convention in 1787.

If ignorance is bliss, then Americans live in a terminal state of euphoria. The War Between the States (as Congress officially termed the conflict in 1928) or the "Civil War" (as the politically correct intentionally mislabel it) alone shatters the myth of "American exceptionalism."

American exceptionalism, however, is not just a myth; it is a *dangerous myth*, because of its four false corollaries: First, the government of the United States is morally and politically superior to all other governments; second, the government of the United States is "indispensable" for the peace and prosperity of the world; third, other governments, as a matter of national self-interest, must conform to the policies of the government of the United States; and fourth, if any country's government refuses to conform, then the government of the United States is morally entitled to impose economic sanctions or launch military attacks against that country.

Neoconservative "theorists" William Kristol and Robert Kagan took the belief in American exceptionalism to its logical conclusion in the Summer 1996 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. The objective of the government of the United States, they declared in "Towards a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," must be nothing less than "benevolent global hegemony." Kristol and Kagan validate the observation of Albert Camus that "the welfare of humanity is always the alibi of tyrants."

The myth of American exceptionalism has transformed the United States from a federal republic with limited constitutional powers into an "evil empire" and a "rogue state." From Afghanistan to Waco, from Ruby Ridge to Yugoslavia, the United States behaves increasingly as both the political equivalent of Friedrich Nietzsche's "superman" and an embryonic version of George Orwell's "Oceania."

Since the advent of political correctness, the U.S. government already practices the Orwellian concepts of "newspeak" and "doublethink." Its domestic and foreign policies are slowly conforming to the official creed of Oceania—"War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, and Ignorance is Strength."

In reality, American exceptionalism is "a lie agreed upon." And the lie begins at the beginning. Contrary to the myth's central tenet, the Constitutional Convention of 1787 was not a lawful assembly that produced an extraordinary political document, but an illegal cabal that staged a *coup d'etat*.

In 1789, just six years after independence, the first republic of the United States, established under the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, was overthrown. The justification for this treason was the conviction shared by many politicians—including George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison—that the first republic was too weak to be effective and would remain so because of Article 1 of its constitution. This article limited the general (or federal) government by declaring:

> Each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled.

As a result, the Confederation Congress had no independent source of revenue and had to rely on requisitions it received irregularly from the states; it had no control over foreign or interstate commerce; and it had no power to compel the sovereign states to honor its decisions.

While the impetus for abolishing the first republic was undeniably political—the belief, however dubious, that the Confederation was unworkable and would soon collapse—there were economic motives as well. Those demanding the creation of a second republic included holders of government securities who had not received interest on their loans; landowners and speculators who had been unable to develop commercially the western lands, because the first republic allegedly could not adequately defend or administer the frontier; and merchants, manufacturers, traders, and shippers whose interstate commerce had been adversely affected by conflicting state laws. All these interest groups also shared a common concern: the financial losses they incurred due to confusion over state and "national" currencies and the introduction by farmers of depreciated paper money.

But the actual overthrow of the first republic was the culmination of a series of events that had begun in 1785. Together, they resulted in a creeping *coup d'etat*.

First, there was the Mount Vernon Compact of March 1785 between Virginia and Maryland (Delaware and Pennsylvania were also invited to join), which dealt with interstate navigation and commerce. It was a success. While not a secessionist movement in the common meaning of the term, the compact, by possessing jurisdiction over the navigation and commercial rights of its members, constituted an embryonic political rival to the first republic.

Second, at the time of the Mount Vernon Compact, the Massachusetts legislature adopted a resolution calling on its delegates to the Confederation Congress to petition for a general convention to revise the Articles of Confederation. Delegates refused on the ground that it would lead to the overthrow of the first republic.

Third, in the summer of 1786, seven amendments to the Articles of Confederation were introduced in the Confederation Congress for reforming and strengthening the first republic. All seven were defeated.

Fourth, by September 1786, farmers were in rebellion throughout New England. Collectively known as "Shays' Rebellion," farmers—so-called "Regulators" (term that would later be replaced by "vigilantes")—took up arms in parts of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and the independent republic of Vermont to block attempts by their creditors to collect debts by foreclosing on their farms. "[B]y one estimate, nine thousand men—one-fourth of the potential armed force of New England—were up in arms against established authorities." Later, the issue of the "anarchy" of the Regulators, and the "inability" of the Confederation to deal with it effectively, would be manipulated at the Constitutional Convention and in the subsequent ratification debates in the states to justify overthrowing the first republic.

Fifth, in September 1786, the Annapolis Convention (meeting ostensibly to expand the Mount Vernon Compact to include additional states) conspired to draft a new federal structure. It was a failure. Five states—including the host state—refused to send delegates, while

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delegates from three other states arrived too late to participate. In desperation, the delegates of the five states present submitted a report to the Confederation Congress noting the failure of all states to attend, expressing the need for "reform" of the general government, and calling for a Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia the following May.

The government of the first republic, the Confederation Congress, agreed to this proposal and, in 1787, authorized a Constitutional Convention. But it forbade the drafting of a new constitution. The instructions were explicit: Delegates were gathering "for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation." Virtually every state government issued similar instructions to its delegates.

Equally explicit was Article 13 of the Articles of Confederation, which declared that no revision was legally permitted "unless such alteration be agreed to in a Congress of the United States, and be afterward confirmed by the Legislatures of every State."

The delegates ignored their instructions and the constitution they had sworn to uphold. Instead, they plotted the overthrow of the first republic. Like good conspirators, they held their deliberations in secret. Armed sentries were posted around the State House where they met. Rules were passed

> That no copy be taken of any entry on the journal during the sitting of the House without leave of the House; That members only be permitted to inspect the journal; That nothing spoken in the House be printed, or otherwise published or communicated without leave.

And all loose scraps of papers were to be destroyed.

In a letter to Oliver Ellsworth, delegate from Connecticut, a friend expressed an opinion of the Constitutional Convention that was shared by many Americans: "Full of Disputation and noisy as the Wind, it is said, that you are afraid of the very Windows, and have a Man planted under them to prevent the Secrets and Doings from flying out."

This obsession with secrecy bordered on paranoia. When Benjamin Franklin, the oldest and (arguably) the most famous delegate to the Constitutional Convention, would attend dinner parties in Philadelphia, the other delegates had a colleague accompany him to ensure that Franklin did not divulge any information of the proceedings to the public.

In such a setting of suspicion and isolation, the delegates, motivated by economic self-interest as well as pragmatic political concerns, illegally drafted a new Constitution, which unconstitutionally declared ratification by only nine of the 13 states to be sufficient for its adoption.

Some delegates, however, raised fundamental questions of legality and logic. Luther Martin of Maryland challenged the majority:

> Will you tell us we ought to trust you because you now enter into a solemn compact with us? This you have done before, and now treat with the utmost contempt. Will you now make an appeal to the Supreme Being, and call on Him to guarantee your observance of this compact? The same you have formerly done for your observance of the Articles of Confederation, which you are now violating in the most wanton manner.

Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts took the majority's position on ratification to its logical conclusion—"if nine out of thirteen can dissolve the compact, Six out of nine will be just as able to dissolve the new one hereafter."

By its actions, the Constitutional Convention proved itself to be a conclave of conspirators who betrayed their sacred oaths to the constitution of the first republic and usurped power. The subsequent adoption of the U.S. Constitution, and the establishment of the second republic, was achieved by extraconstitutional means. It was a bloodless *coup d'etat*. It was, in fact, a very civil *coup d'etat*. But it was a *coup d'etat*, nonetheless.

The second republic, however, did share its predecessor's ideological conviction that the United States was a compact among sovereign states, which had delegated limited powers to the government. In the words of Alexander Hamilton, one of the chief architects of the second republic, the United States would "still be, in fact and in theory, an association of States, or a confederacy."

But the *coup d'etat* of 1789 set a suicidal precedent. On the same pretext of establishing "a more perfect union," the second republic was overthrown by Abraham Lincoln when he launched his war against the South—a war the U.S. Supreme Court declared unconstitutional in the "Prize Cases" of December 1862. Lincoln destroyed the federal principles of 1783 and 1789 and replaced them with the ideological foundation for today's centralized, "welfare-warfare," bureaucratic state.

To the degree that American exceptionalism ever existed, it was as an experiment in limited government based on the unique concept of dual sovereignties—state and federal—embodied in the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union. But that political experiment lasted only six years, from 1783 to 1789. The Constitutional Convention did not create American exceptionalism; it destroyed it.

Joseph E. Fallon, author of Deconstructing America: Immigration, Nationality and Statehood *(Council for Social and Economic Studies, Washington, D.C.), writes from Rye, New York.*

MUSIC

Berlioz: A Musical Apotheosis

by Ralph de Toledano

Until the advent of the long-playing record, almost all of the music of Hector Berlioz was, for most Americans, a silent enigma, available only to those who could read a score and really hear it. Otherwise reasonable critics wrote of his "half-crazy ideas." Some argued that he achieved his effects, both good and bad, "by accident." *Grove's* bemoaned his lapses into bad taste and deplored his emphasis on "emphasis" rather than "beauty"—mystified by the intensity that marks his work. Such "advanced" musicologists as Paul Henry Lang, *ex cathedra* from Columbia University, blamed Berlioz for being both too tied to past practices and reaching too far forward into the future. And two composers who owed much to Berlioz, Debussy and Stravinsky, dismissed him as a "musical monster" and a "romantic orgiast."

I do not hold music critics in the same easy contempt that was George Bernard Shaw's stock-in-trade. But I have found it shocking that they should allow non-musical considerations to lead them astray. Much of Berlioz's reputation derived

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from his stormy role in French "musical politics and his battles with the corrupt establishment, and his reputation was tied to the famous Doré caricature—flying wild hair and coattails. Those who wanted to listen to what Berlioz created, rather than to what the critics said of him, had little more to go by than a few recorded excerpts from the *Damnation of Faust*, and the concert halls were not much more generous. Today, Schwann's catalogue lists columns of recordings of the *Symphonie Fantastique*, *Harold in Italy*, the *Requiem*, *Romeo et Juliette*, the *Enfance du Christ*, and others of his works. Yet some critics still write of his "flawed" passages and miss the logic of his musical thinking.

But they are confronted by the music itself—a confrontation not possible when his music could not be heard—and by the respect of those who play it. They must also take into account Jacques Barzun's brilliant and insightful two-volume *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* and the composer's own *Memoirs*, which are reasonably available. From the soul-shaking *fortissimi* of his *Tuba Mirum* to the violins *in sordino*, it is there. And for those of us who return again and again, Berlioz grows with each playing, as new inner voices, new intricacies, and new insights reveal themselves.

For some, of course, Berlioz is forever damned by the label of "romantic"—presumably the voice and, in some ways, the progenitor of an oft-misunderstood period in which the arts moved away from "classicism" and proclaimed a new and increased sensibility. It was not really new, of course, since romanticism was a refocusing of elements which, as Jacques Barzun has noted, were not alien to Euripides. How true that is can be seen in any analysis of the Berlioz *oeuvre*, which involves and incorporates the voices and the structure of all schools, going back to plainchant. Even the *leitmotif*, advertised as a distinguishing mark of romanticism, has an ancient derivation. And can we forget Berlioz's love affair with Shakespeare, or that he once attended eight consecutive performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*?

To wrap Berlioz in the cliché of impetuous artist, rapturously dashing off scores between breakfast and lunch, ignores that his *Grande traite* on instrumentation and orchestration is one of the most important contributions of his century to symphonic art, that he refined his scores painstakingly, and that as a conductor—and he was a fine one—he insisted on thorough fidelity to the composer's intent. His censure of Wagner, whose conducting he likened to "dancing on a slack rope . . . *sempre tempo rubato*," speaks for that insistence. Wagner's riposte that Berlioz was a "vulgar time-beater"—out of the great Mannheim School, perhaps—reinforces the point. (Wagner might have confessed at the time to his considerable plagiarism of Berlioz.) However "romantic" (in the pejorative sense) Berlioz's flying coattails may have been, he approached music as a discipline, not as an exercise in psychoanalysis.

Berlioz was composer, conductor, and instrumentalist—his instrument being the orchestra, though he played an excellent classical guitar. His contemporaries scoffed at his "idea orchestra" of 465 instruments and 360 voices—252 strings, 30 pianos, phalanxes of brass and woodwinds, and a percussion section of 50—still smaller than Gustav Mahler's ideal 1,000-piece orchestra. What he sought was not grandiosity but the "million combinations possible . . . in richness of harmony, variety of sounds, [and] multitude of contrasts." Mahler and Bruckner achieved a composite of instrumental timbres, blending, whereas Berlioz sought and achieved a clarity and brilliance by keeping the instruments at all times recognizable. And it was with this musical of purpose that, at the first full performance of the *Requiem*, he augmented his orchestra with four brass bands, each at one of the distant corners of the *Invalides* where Napoleon was buried.

We can choose today from many recordings of Berlioz's great *oeuvre*. Of the *Harold in Italy*, I once found the Charles Munch/Boston Symphony/William Primrose version for RCA the closest to the Berlioz hope that "the viola should figure as more or less active personage of constantly preserved individuality rather than the show-off instrument of the classical concerto." But this recording suffers from the over-trained and overmanicured Boston Symphony, and I find greater empathy with Yehudi Menuhin's traversal with Sir Colin Davis and the Philharmonia Orchestra. There is a fluidity and introspection in Menuhin's playing which Primrose's highly disciplined technique seems to lose. As for program, that myth goes by the board since, in mid-composition, Berlioz changed the setting from Scottish to Italian.

Like Beethoven, Berlioz did not possess what critics have called the "stage sense," so I flee from his operas. But his overtures are something else—rich, melodic, and alive—and in Sir Thomas Beecham's traversal for Columbia, you will be caught up by that delicately contrived passage of the *Francs Juges* in which strings and woodwinds move in common time while the tympani shifts from 3/4 to 2/2 time, with the entire orchestra challenged in the last measures by the bass drum in 3/4 time.

Berlioz was 30, a leader of the French *avant-garde*, when his *Requiem* was performed at the Invalides. He had written it almost obsessively with his head "bursting with the flood of ideas"—and the poet Alfred de Vigny would write that it was "beautiful and strange, wild, convulsively throbbing and heartrending." But unlike any other *Requiem*, it was addressed to the dead and dying, not to the mourners. Death and transfiguration and the fear of Hell, a tremendous assault on man's mortal preoccupation—it in no way soothes the living or brings them peace. Perhaps St. Peter would prefer a quieter knock at the gates of Heaven or agree with what Berlioz is doing, shaking a fist at God—but it is still music of faith.

Yet the *Requiem*—or the intricate *Te Deum*, with its majestic double fugue, written a dozen years later—was not his only religious voice. *L'Enfance du Christ* speaks simply and tenderly—so much so that Berlioz, to confound his critics of his authorship at the first performance, wanted the *Enfance* sung almost like plainchant, not with some aspiring and finger-milking prima donna exhibiting her larynx. And to this can be added the "symphonic opera," *Romeo et Juliette*, celebrating more earthly passions. Jacques Barzun says that it is Berlioz's only flawless work—an evocation, though certainly not a translation into music of Shakespeare's drama. For this, the world can thank Paganini, the great violin virtuoso who presented Berlioz with 20,000 francs to allow him six months of uninterrupted work without the distractions of the journalism with which he kept himself alive.

Ralph de Toledano writes from Washington, D.C.

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by George McCartney

The School of Savagery

The 1968 film *Planet of the Apes* was based on French novelist Pierre Boulle's 1963 Swiftian satire. On screen, the adaptation became a wildly popular and, not coincidentally, satirically tamer narrative.

The movie resembles an expanded *Twilight Zone* episode. That's not surprising: Rod Serling worked on the screenplay. Charlton Heston plays an astronaut whose rocket takes a wrong turn and somehow passes through the space-time continuum to crash on Earth in the distant future. There, he discovers that apes have gained control of the planet and made humans their slaves. Once established, the conceit of a species-dominance switch enabled the movie to deploy a series of arch parallels to the "real world" issues of the late 60's, the kind of groaners that Serling could never resist: man's inhumanity to man, fractious race relations, small-minded xenophobia, the dangers of high-tech weaponry, etc. All of this was allegorized through ape make-up. Where, the film demanded to know, was the line between civilization and savagery?

Planet of the Apes became a huge success, spawning four sequels and a television serial. Why? It's the *Star Trek* phenomenon. Films like these inhabit the sententious end of the sci-fi spectrum. They appeal to Americans' two basic needs: moral uplift and bargain savings. You can watch them for fun and feel edified at the same time—an irresistible two-for-one deal.

Tim Burton's new *Planet of the Apes* wants to walk the same profitable moral line while being self-consciously cool. This two-track strategy doesn't work. Burton ironizes his narrative until he loses all control of it. Serling believed in the moral purpose of his project; Burton does not. Lame as they were, Serling's anachronistic references to contemporary concerns were meant to surprise us into moral reflection; Burton's merely invite us to indulge in superior snickering. Consider what passes for wit in Burton's film. He has one sensitive ape—played with simian delicacy by Helena Bonham Carter—plead for human rights, only to be rebuffed with the old racist canard: "How," her father asks impatiently, "can you tell one from the other?" When an orangutan who sells humans into slavery finds himself cornered by armed humans, he whimpers Rodney King-style, "Can't we all just get along?" Later, a fascist chimp declares, "Extremism in the defense of apes is no vice." These jokey references make it impossible for the audience to suspend disbelief. When the film tries to shift into a rousing adventure mode, we're left behind. No matter how ferociously staged, the battles between the species leave us unmoved. What can be at stake in a story this campy?

Planet of the Apes

Produced and distributed by 20th Century Fox
Directed by Tim Burton
Screenplay by William Broyles, Jr., from Pierre Boulle's novel

Ghost World

Produced by Capitol Films, United Artists, and John Malkovich
Directed by Terry Zwigoff
Screenplay by Daniel Clowes with Terry Zwigoff
Released by MGM-UA

Still, there are things to enjoy here. Burton's narrative skills may be weak, but he knows how to hypnotize us visually. The apes' tree-house villages look absolutely convincing. The costumes and makeup are flawless. We may not believe the story, but it's difficult to doubt that we are in the presence of thinking, talking apes. There is only one distracting lapse in verisimilitude: Carter wears mascara and lipstick over her ape mask. I suppose this was meant to give her feminine appeal so that we wouldn't be entirely disconcerted when she makes eyes at Mark Wahlberg, who plays the Heston role. No doubt, Peter Singer would approve of such interspecies romance.

As the fascist chimpanzee General Thade, Tim Roth does best. He plays his role as one extended acting exercise, doing a chimp version of Richard III. As he sidles stoopingly into their presence, the other apes cringe, their eyes widening fearfully. He sniffs at them stertorously, pawing at their shoulders with ambiguous primate gestures. Does he mean to preen the fleas from their fur or to throttle them? Roth is menace incarnate. When he's on screen, you fully believe in his danger. He's the one steel beam, however twisted, in an otherwise papier-mâché construction.

Paul Giamatti is also exceptional as the orangutan slave trader, and he gets to deliver the one genuinely comic line in the film. As he strikes a deal to sell a three-year-old girl to an ape family, he warns them to get rid of the pet before it reaches puberty: "The one thing you don't want in your house is a human teenager."

As if to prove the monkey right, Terry Zwigoff, in his ingenious adaptation of Daniel Clowes' graphic novel, *Ghost Story*, gives us teenagers in malodorous bloom.

We first meet the 17-year-old principals, Enid (Thora Birch) and Rebecca (Scarlett Johannson), at their high-school graduation, each flaunting a disdainfully curled lip at the proceedings. They practically gag when the valedictorian announces that "high school is like the training wheels for the bicycle of real life." Unlike this cheerful optimist, they don't see anything particularly real ahead of them. As a result, they're disaffected, sullen, aimless, and randomly mischievous. In another, saner age, their adolescent nihilism would be insufferable—and Zwigoff acknowledges this. He doesn't take the conventional route of turning these girls into soulful teens martyred by insensitive adults. He insists, however, that their response to contemporary culture is not entirely unwarranted. These girls may not be geniuses, but they're perceptive enough to recognize the emptiness of the life that America has prepared for them. They want out but find themselves arrested in a state of frozen petulance. They can't quite figure out where to go or what to do.

The studio thought police must have been asleep at the switch during the making of this bracingly acerbic film. Zwigoff openly mocks a gamut of contemporary heroes—including pro-abortion lobbyists and hypocritical diversity

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mongerers—by rigorously limiting the film's point of view. We see the world entirely through the eyes of Enid and Rebecca. The view is chastening, especially since they are far more innocent than they would dare admit.

The friends wander about their California suburb's strip malls, trucking their way along the sidewalks in clunky platform shoes and laughably abbreviated skirts. Their getups unflatteringly accentuate their wide hips and slouched shoulders, making them look like wanton hoydens. Of course, they're nothing of the kind. Sure, they talk tough about sex, but their behavior reveals their inexperience. They can't seem to get dates; for romantic excitement, they're reduced to girlishly teasing a young man working the counter at a convenience store. Rather than the worldly seductresses they pretend to be, these girls are undoubtedly still virgins. In another time, their intact state might have been grounds for personal confidence and moral pride—but not in modern America, where pop culture relentlessly schools the young to believe that something's wrong if you're not sexually rampant by 14. To avoid embarrassment, Enid and Rebecca have no choice. They must pretend to be well experienced in debauchery. Enid's mischievous visit to the town's adult bookstore gives the lie to her pose, however. After watching men furtively thumb porn magazines for a minute or so, she bursts out laughing. It's too ridiculous, and she's not afraid to let the gentlemen know that she thinks they are contemptible.

Zwigoff never ridicules the girls, treating them instead with gentle, appreciative humor. He reserves his scorn for the forces within our society that exploit normal adolescent confusion, especially the sordid pop-culture industry and the ideologues of various leftist agendas.

For instance, Enid's art teacher (Illeana Douglas) begins her course by showing her own video production featuring a doll being dismembered, its limbs cast one by one into a bloody toilet bowl. At its conclusion, she tells her students that she wanted to give them "an idea of what it's like to be in my specific skin." She's convinced that art of genuine merit must fuse aesthetic expression with personal confession. What she's confessing is, of course, all too obvious. A few meetings later, a go-getter coed follows her lead, exhibiting a sculpture she's constructed of coat hangers, cannily explaining that it "speaks to a woman's right to choose." This, clearly, is a girl who knows how to play the game. Predictably, the teacher can't restrain her enthusiasm for this marriage of aesthetics and activism. Enid, however, slumps in her seat, her face glum with misgivings. She may lack the resources to articulate her dissent from America's prevailing abortion-rights ethos, but she intuitively recoils at the grotesque spectacle of adults encouraging the young to support the murder of inconvenient babies. It does, after all, cut rather closely to an already alienated adolescent's bone.

The best element in the narrative is Enid's friendship with Seymour (the always reliable Steve Buscemi), a forty-something connoisseur of blues and ragtime. She meets him at a garage sale, where he's selling 78 LPs of his favorite artists. Although he's an unprepossessing fellow, he fascinates her. It's easy to see why: He's completely out of step with the contemporary culture that has failed her so miserably. He decorates his room with 1940's film posters, book covers, and magazine advertisements. As Enid says, "He's such a clueless dork, he's almost cool."

Seymour, as his name implies, helps Enid *see more*. He reveals the increasingly ghostly world of an earlier America that modern commercial and political interests have tried to erase. In perhaps the film's most daring assault on today's programmed attitudes, Enid discovers in Seymour's apartment an advertisement from the 1930's restaurant chain, Coon's Chicken Inns. It features a caricature of a moonfaced negro wearing a bellman's cap. He grins from ear to ear, winking as he offers the observer country-fried poultry. Startled at what she takes to be flagrant racism, Enid challenges Seymour. He explains that such imagery was not generally thought offensive in the early 20th century. Now, he sarcastically continues, the company has renamed itself Cook's Chicken, deferring to today's more tender sensibilities. Enid asks wonderingly, "Are you saying things were better back then?" Admitting that he thinks race relations are probably better today, he goes on to explain that such issues are complicated. "People still hate one another; they just know how to hide it better." Enid senses she's onto something and borrows the picture to show her art class. The other students predictably greet it with the shocked dismay expected of them. Enid then unmasks their reflexive hypocrisy. Her "found art," she argues, reveals the hidden racism in our midst.

This is, of course, tricky ground. I take Zwigoff to mean that Americans have been hectored into conforming to a variety of institutional hypocrisies concerning not only race but supposed sexual discrimination, cultural differences, religious beliefs, and censorship—to name just a few. Consider how "diversity" has become the password of enlightenment among business executives who routinely spend their weekends playing golf on all-white courses. It's a commonplace today that the racism African-Americans find most irksome is the kind that's veiled behind the seeming acceptance of polite white folks. But more than this, how many among the college-educated middle class are openly willing to question "a woman's right to choose"? How many will publicly risk saying that AIDS is a disease almost always contracted through extravagantly perverse behavior? Many have decided, prudently or spinelessly, to avoid the possible consequences of crossing the lines set down by well-heeled, powerful interest groups. The older America might have been rougher and filled with all manner of intolerance, but at least people knew where they stood.

The Coon's Chicken ad propels this remarkable film to a denouement that is at once hilarious, sad, and troubling. Unlike Burton's *Planet of the Apes* with its ersatz moralizing, Zwigoff's film raises a real question of conscience: Why do we so easily make peace with our civic savageries?

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The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

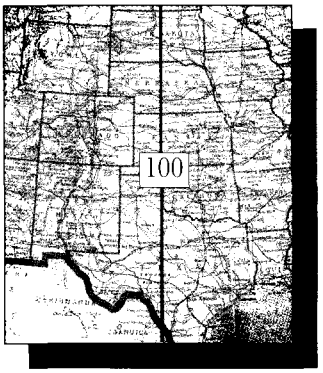
Getting Somewhere

Jackson Hole is burning up. Gerry Spence had to evacuate his ranch ahead of the wildfires, and Dick Cheney could be next. Here above timberline in the Snowy Range of the Medicine Bow Mountains, 400 miles to the southeast, the breeze is cool, the grass is fresh and green, and the ponds of standing water are connected by torrenting rivulets of snow melt. There are also no tourists, and you don't have to be a millionaire to live here—as I'd be doing tonight, if only we'd brought the camp gear along with us.

Everyone who loves the outdoors is in love with a special place in the outdoors, as truly as if it were a woman, that no other place can ever quite compete with. Mine is the Wyoming Range north of Kemmerer, Wyoming, which I explored and hunted—by four-wheel-drive, on foot, and on horseback—for 18 years before I left in the summer of 1997 for southern New Mexico, where I suffered the heat and the Mex-Mex culture for nearly two years before coming home to Wyoming. For the next year and a half, I sulked in Laramie, pining for the western end of the state, before I came to my senses. There's no point being miserable, Jim Tate likes to say. And Tom Sheeley calls having fun the best revenge. So this summer, I've been in the Snowies with the horses as often as possible, seeing new things and learning new country. In fact, the Wyoming Range has nothing more beautiful to offer than this. (I tell myself that, the way you tell yourself the girl you loved for half a lifetime is *really* no more lovely than the one you met last night.)

My reluctance to embrace the new country seems evident from my uncharacteristic failure to carry along a map (I love maps) of it. The Snowies are a geographically restricted and topologically uncomplicated formation compared to what I'm used to traveling through. Subconsciously, I must be defying the mountains to disorient and lose me in their dark green and slatey granite folds.

Seen from Laramie, the Snowy Mountains make a single, undivided, granitic barrier running north to south. Viewed from exactly the right angle northwest



across the range from a southeastern standpoint near Jelm Mountain, or southeast from a northwestern vantage in the vicinity of Arlington on Interstate 80, their bifurcated structure is apparent: two roughly parallel fins, dislocated from each other on an east-west as well as a north-south axis to create a gap, or pass, between the non-contiguous ends. It took me several months to observe the discontinuity and only a few seconds to decide I had to go there, cross country between the two structures for a look over into western Wyoming and what had to be a spectacular backside view of Elk Mountain to the northwest. It looked like a simple enough passage to negotiate—especially once you got above timberline and into the alpine country, where a trail, though convenient, is generally an unnecessary alternative to bushwhacking among the lakes and tors—so I chose to forego a visit to the bureaucratic guardians of the National Forest Service for a map of the area and navigate by sightlines instead of the charts.

Backpackers think—or pretend to think—that taking a horse into wilderness gives you an air-cooled, air-suspended, V-8, turbo-assisted, super-deluxe ride, equivalent to what you get from a Cadillac SUV with independent four-track articulated suspension. Having ridden many hundreds—perhaps even thousands—of miles horseback in mountainous terrain, I know better: You don't invite just *anyone* along to share the adventure. For this one, I recruited a fellow lapswimmer from UW's Halfacre Pool: a young lady who tunes pianos for a living while she completes her theatrical studies at the university, guaranteed fit for any backcountry ordeal and, as it happens, exceedingly pretty into the bargain.

We made a later than planned departure from town, delayed first by Ann's needing to finish up a résumé and next by my gelding, who horsed us like a tarpon on a line for three quarters of an hour before allowing himself to be caught and haltered. Two weeks before, while I had my right arm around his neck and was attempting to squeeze a couple of grams of Bute onto the back of his tongue with my other hand, he'd reared suddenly, catching me in the chest with his knees and throwing me sideways with enough force to break my watchband, separate a couple of ribs, and tear the muscle at the base of my right shoulder blade. Twenty-one-year-old horses that act like unbroke yearlings have a better chance of being sold to the glue factory than enjoying an honorable retirement at pasture. Ann and I finally got everyone loaded, and we started for the mountains, stretching blue along the western horizon beneath the early afternoon cloud buildup, at last.

"I hope you brought raingear with you," I said to Ann.

She fished in her daypack and pulled out something semi-transparent and very brief that crackled and had a smiley face printed on it in yellow. A Wal-Mart bag, actually, with armholes cut in it to fit over her bathing-suit top.

"I think I have an extra poncho with me in the saddlebags," I told her.

"Oh, this is all I need! I use them for biking and running, and everything."

The cloudburst commenced as we arrived at the trailhead below Brooklyn Lake (elevation approximately 10,000 feet). I made Ann sit in the cab while I saddled the horses in the downpour. Just when we were ready to ride, the thunder went booming away to the northeast, and the sky cleared.

"Better bring your Wally-Dior thing just in case," I suggested. "That way we'll be half prepared at least, since I don't have a map. Who up here were you planning to impress, anyway?"

Having identified four designated routes leading in the general direction of the ridge, I chose the second as being the most likely to skirt the rocky shoulder of mountain below timberline, before ascending to the alpine meadow above. The dirt trail, passing among wide-

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spaced trees over mainly level ground, made for easy travel and echoed the horses' footfalls like a drum. We rode on through the woods a mile or so before daylight broke through the treeline ahead and we came to an open park bordering the willowy bed of a creek and rising toward granite cliffs across the stream.

"This is what *I* like best," Ann said happily. "But I enjoy riding in the woods, too."

We crossed the creek at the ford below the swamp and continued across a grassy slope covered with wildflowers under a bench grown up with widespaced gnarled pine trees, an excellent place to put a camp. But, rather than climbing up by the bench to the granite fields some hundreds of feet above, the trail turned with the creek and followed it downhill into the timber.

"I'm glad you like riding in the woods," I told Ann, "since it looks like we'll be doing plenty of it, the rest of the afternoon." You don't have to know where you're going to get somewhere.

The groundcover showed vivid green between the straight tall trees as if picked out by the sun, occluded once more by a small roiling storm coming off the peaks. The creek ran full beside the trail, but now the sound of it was covered by wind and the rolling thunder. Rain fell from dark clouds, the smiley-face came out again like a small defiant sun bobbing downhill above the mare's gray rump, and I reached the poncho from the saddle bags and put my head through the center hole. We rode for ten miles this way before I let the gelding overtake the mare and Ann and drew rein beside them at a wide place in the trail beside a slough.

"We must be almost down to Centennial by now," I said, turning the horse. "Bet I make it to the barn before you do."

In the freight-train rush to the top of the mountain, granite ledges and carpets of wildflowers rolled beneath the thundering hooves, and startled elk grazing in sunset parks and lengthening forest shadows flashed past beneath an arcing double rainbow. The horses were winded at the willow swamp, and we rode the last mile to the trailer at a plodding walk, in an aura of horse sweat and body heat.

"That didn't work out exactly as planned," I told Ann as we pulled the saddle pads from the lathered horses, "but we had a good ride today, anyway."

"It was lovely," she agreed. "My rain gear worked better than your map, by the way."

I was too busy again that week to stop by the Forest Service for a map and arrived at Brooklyn Lake prepared to tackle the trail around behind Lake Marie and from there over the mountain to Medicine Bow Peak. But Ann proposed the intermediate trail, between the higher and lower routes. She seemed politely decided about it, and so I let her have her way. (A man has a duty to oblige a lady, especially when she could be right.) We set out on a broad earthen track—like part of the U.S. Interstate Trail System—that skirted a wide meadow before turning abruptly and plunging into the forest. Half a mile farther on, a shining snowdrift the size of a small glacier appeared through the trees, and we broke onto the alpine landscape, all bare rock and water, grass and wildflowers and krummholz pine, and along the trail a carved wooden sign pointing the direction to the Gap Lakes and the pass over to the west slope of the Snowy Range.

"After this, I wear the raingear, and we use *your* map," I suggested. "Damn, I wish I'd brought the camp gear with us."

The trail climbed by easy switchbacks to the pass, cutting wide as a valley from west to east across the summit of the mountains. Water ran everywhere, the higher ponds and small lakes spilling over and running downhill by rocky sluices to those below, and the wind pouring through from the western deserts scraped roughened cobalt patches on the shining turquoise skins of the standing waters around. The wind felt chilly when the sun ducked behind an easy white cloud, but we rode straight into it where we could to hold off the raging horseflies that goaded the horses almost to bucking fits. Looking back, I saw the yellow plain stretching away toward town and, beyond it, the dark ripple of the Laramie Mountains; while ahead, a black triangle eased itself by millimeters above the stratospheric horizon—Elk Mountain, still 40 miles away by line of sight but distinctive through the sagebrush haze, a dark sentinel posted at the gate to the western desert.

I was following Ann's bouncing yellow ponytail as we crossed over behind the granite ridge onto the west slope of the mountain, opening away to a towering wilderness of rock and ice on which the sky seemed to balance. I called her off the trail, and we rode on slowly together across the rolling green highland, south by southwest toward Medicine Bow Peak into a hard wind chilled by the glaciers ahead, sheerly hanging from a frozen gray sky. Ann reached behind herself to untie her windbreaker from the saddle strings and pulled it on over the bathing-suit top.

"It's another world back here," she said.

"Another world was what we're looking for."

"And it's no distance at all, really—like passing from one dimension into another."

"I'm glad you're not disappointed," I told her, thinking how Rhonda Lyon back in California would have enjoyed this day.

We rode out in three hours and went for supper and a bottle of red wine at the Old Corral in Centennial, population 100, whose most famous part-time resident is Annie Proulx, the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and author of the story "Broke-back Mountain," about two Wyoming sheepherders who spend the winter months at home with their loving families and the summer ones sodomizing one another in their mountain camp.

It was dark when we left the restaurant and started back across the plain toward town. An electrical storm behind the Laramie Mountains spanned the eastern horizon, one lightning flash overlapping another like a fireworks display, sheets and cells and glimmering globes of electricity maintaining an overall illumination as constant as the accompanying artillery thunder. When raindrops spattered on the windshield, I put the truck window down to receive the welcome scent of rain and the cool freshened air on my face.

"You're only doing 45 miles an hour," Ann, her straight profile outlined by the dashboard glow, said.

"I didn't know we were in a hurry," I told her.

"Well. We do have to get home, *sometime*."

I didn't agree with her, but it seemed pointless to say so.

"Yes," I said, "I suppose we do."

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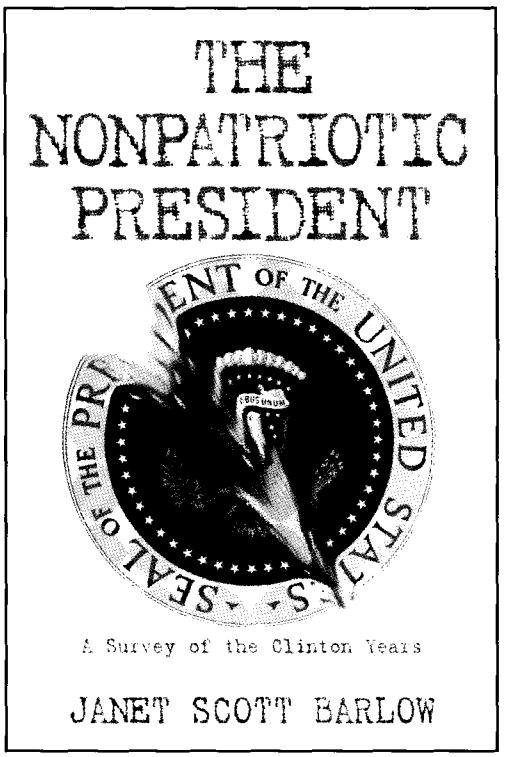

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